THE TRIUMPH OF BENEVOLENCE.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

CHAPTER XX.

A remarkable inſtance inſtance of gratitude. The triumph of prudence: and the courſe WILLS *took, when he had received the reward of his good nature.*

WILLS had not been much at home during his endeavours to releaſe Belton. This alarmed his aunt, as well from her regard to his perſonal ſafety, as her fear leſt he ſhould follow evil courſes, and run into extravagance: and indeed he could not have taken, in her opinion, a more evil courſe, than that which led to the ſpending of his money. The noble captain Mac Gregor, who was now become a conſtant viſitor, and received on the footing of an old acquaintance, or rather, an intimate friend, did not fail to improve theſe

notions; which Miſs Kingley no ſooner conceived, than ſhe communicated to him. This was what Mac Gregor aimed at. To be made a confidant in the family, was a token of importance: he failed not to improve the circumſtance, and at laſt became neceſſary to Miſs Kingley, on whom our judicious reader will, no doubt, perceive, that he had caſt the eye of deſire: but whether his affection proceeded from his fondneſs for the lady, or the greatneſs of her fortune, we leave to him to determine: it is our buſineſs to relate facts only. Wills, in order to releaſe Belton, had mortgaged one hundred pounds per annum. He knew that he ſhould never be in his aunt's good graces again, if ſhe came to knowledge of this circumſtance: he therefore determined to live at home entirely, with as much frugality as poſſible, and to apply himſelf totally to his ſtudies. This reformation in his manners pleaſed his aunt much, and he was beginning to win upon her again: for ſhe thought his conduct, which was in reality the effect of neceſſity, a tacit approbation of her principles and manners. But this ſcene was ſoon changed; and poor Wills, like his father, was made the ſacri-

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fice of avarice. But it is neceſſary, for the reader's inſtruction, to unravel this affair.

Mac Gregor, who was a man that regarded his worldly intereſt very much, was acquainted with ſeveral of thoſe people, who procure money in the city, and as ſometimes a man who is attentive may make a lucky hit in that way, he thought it profitable to be known to them: beſides, as they were not very extravagant people, he could not ſpend much money in their company. The diſcourſe among them one night happened to turn upon perſonal beauty in men, and ſeveral nice diſtinctions were made among theſe diſcerning gentlemen, when one of them ſaid, he had never ſeen a handſomer man than a Mr. Wills who was at his office a few days before that. Mac Gregor cocked up his ears at that intelligence, and pretending not to know him, aſked him what manner of man he was. The other, in order to ſupport his opinion, gave him a minute deſcription of Wills's perſon. And here we cannot help digreſſing, to aſſure our reader, that it was ſuch a one as the author of a certain voyage promiſes in the title of his book, where he intends to give his readers a *minute* deſcription of

the *gigantic* people called Patagonians —— Mac Gregor immediately found Miſs Kingley's nephew in this deſcription: and the relator being a countryman of his, he could not help aſking him what buſineſs he had there. The other refuſed to tell him at firſt; but being over-perſuaded, and an additional tiff of punch called for, he divulged the whole affair, and informed Mac Gregor of every tranſaction. Wills, whom Mac Gregor conſidered as his only obſtacle, was now in his power: but how to convince Miſs Kingley that he had done this thing, was not eaſily contrived. He determined to make a bold puſh and aſked the other where the deeds were: the Scotchman told him, in his power. Then Mac Gregor opened his whole ſcheme to his friend; and giving him to underſtand what a promiſing proſpect there was of his being poſſeſſed of all the old maid's fortune, and aſſuring him that he would reward him very amply, when in his power, if he would confide in him, and let him have the deeds for one day only. Terms were ſettled and Mac Gregor got poſſeſſion of the deed; with which he haſtened, as faſt as he could go, to the preſence of his beloved.

He arrived there ſoon after breakfaſt: and Wills being retired to his library, he found Miſs Kingley, very fortunately, alone. After the uſual ceremonies, he began to aſſure her of the profound reſpect he entertained for her, and that his gratitude for the civilities he had received from her would not ſuffer him to ſee her intereſt prejudiced, or conceal any thing from her where that might be at ſtake. He could not have alarmed her more than by this exordium. The very ſound of her intereſt being prejudiced, awoke all her attention. She thanked him very heartily for his kindneſs; and aſſured him, on the other hand, that ſhe ſhould take every method in her power to make him an adequate return: but intreated to know, what it was that he had to reveal to her. That was not to be done at once. He repreſented to her, to enhance the obligation, that he ſhould, through his regard for her, offend a friend whom he owed many good ſervices to; but he muſt inſiſt upon a promiſe never to reveal it. This ſhe inſtantly aſſented to, but yet he heſitated; and began to apologize for the giddineſs and warmth of temper in young people; that great allowances ſhould be made; and he repented

having gone ſo far, conſidering how the young gentleman was ſituated. "Ah!" ſaid ſhe, interrupting him, "my nephew "has been doing ſome raſh thing."

"THERE's no eſcaping your penetration, "Madam," ſaid the captain; it is but too "true: and it goes to my heart, to think "that I ſhould accuſe him of paying ſo "little attention to prudence."

"AH! Sir," ſaid ſhe eagerly, "what has "he done?"

"I fear to tell you, Madam: but you "muſt promiſe not to be angry with him."

"LET me know inſtantly," ſaid ſhe, raiſed to the higheſt pitch of doubt and ſuſpence.

MAC Gregor anſwered, by putting the deed into her hands; which, when ſhe underſtood the ſignification of, her rage was not to be expreſſed, Mac Gregor was obliged to calm her tranſports, to prevent her informing poor Wills of it at once. He repreſented to her, that he ſhould act cautiouſly, and not expoſe him to the reproaches of her nephew, who would very juſtly accuſe him of being an incendiary;

when nothing in the world would have made him guilty of ſuch an act, but his friendſhip for her, and that ſhe might be a witneſs of the bad uſe he made of his fortune. Her tranſports ſubſided and ſhe ſubmitted entirely to the guidance of Mac Gregor. They then entered into a conſultation how to break the matter to him, and were puzzling themſelves to find out to what purpoſe this immenſe ſum could be applied. Mac Gregor inſinuated, that it might be for the ſupplying ſome favourite girl; for Wills had not been more finely dreſſed than ordinary lately, nor had he been ſeen with much money about him; therefore this conjecture was eſtabliſhed. "Ah the lewd villain!" ſaid Miſs Kingley, "I will be even with him: fear me not."

"But, Madam, conſider me."

"Depend upon it, my dear captain, "your ſafety is as dear to me as my own."

He departed to return the deed, of which he had made ſuch notable uſe, into the hands of his friend; and ſhe to ruminate on this adventure, and to determine how ſhe ſhould proceed with her unfortunate nephew, who never dreamed of

the ſtorm that was brewing. — And here we cannot help offering a conjecture, that it was more from the apprehenſion that Wills would take a proper *perſonal* ſatisfaction from Mac Gregor for interfering in his affairs, than from the *verbal* odium or ſcandal that might be thrown upon him by a ſet of people whom he deſpiſed moſt heartily, called the honeſt and generous part of the world, that he inſiſted upon Miſs Kingley's keeping the part he bore, in diſcloſing this affair, a ſecret.

AFTER a ſilent dinner on the part of the aunt, and not very entertaining to Wills, when the things were removed, and the ſervant gone, ſhe aſked him, whether he had given over all thoughts of Miſs Collins. He aſſured her, with great truth, that he had. "And have you formed no "other connection, Frank?"

"NONE in the world, Madam."

"COME," ſays ſhe, "I know young "men can't live without a miſtreſs: It is "excuſable: I am ſure you are paying "your addreſſes to ſomebody."

"My heart is intirely diſengaged."

THEN what have you been doing ſo "often in London lately?"

"BUSINESS, indeed, Madam, took me "there, and not pleaſure."

"WHAT, I ſuppoſe you were looking "out for a proper place for yourſelf. It is "very commendable truly. (He remained ſilent) "Was it ſo?" ſaid ſhe.

HE anſwered, that it was not.

"How comes that about? for I imagin-"ed, by your raiſing four hundred pounds, "you were going to purchaſe ſome pro-"fitable place, or procure yourſelf ſome "employment without my knowledge. — "I am ſure it muſt be ſo; or you could "never have occaſion for ſo much money."

WILLS knew not what to anſwer, accuſtomed from his infancy never to be guilty of a breach of truth. He had no notion of denying the fact, or concealing his motives for doing it, ſince he found her acquainted with what he had done. It was a thunder-ſtroke to him; for he would have done every thing in his power to have kept it from her knowledge, as he well knew that, in her preſent diſpoſition, it

would infallibly be his utter ruin, "Tis "very true, Madam, that I have done so; "and I should be very glad to know how "it reached you."

"That you shall never know. But pray "for what purpose did you raise this im-"mense sum of money?"

"For the best of purposes; to relieve "honesty and virtue from want and ruin."

"I suppose you have got undeniable se-"curity for your money."

"I never thought of it."

"I wonder how you could attempt to "dispose of my property, without my con-"sent."

"I thought, Madam, you had given "that estate to me."

"But did not I redeem it before, Sir? "pray let me hear on whom you have "squandered this sum of money."

Wills related the story partly: for he concealed the names, and their present situation, lest his aunt should take it into her head to go to them: but he enlarged on their distressed and miserable situation, and de-

ſcribed the horrors of their priſon, with an eloquence and a particularity that would have melted any heart that was not ſteeled by avarice.

"And ſo, Sir," ſaid ſhe to him, when he had finiſhed, "it is upon raſcally agents, "and pretented ſaints, that you beſtow "your money. I did not imagine that "your eſtate was ſufficient to ſupport you, "and pay off other peoples debts. How-"ever, I am very glad to hear it is: and "I have no doubt but it will encreaſe in "ſuch good hands as yours: therefore," added ſhe, "it would be very ridiculous "in me to maintain you, who can main-"tain other people. I think Mr. Wills, "the leaſt you could have done was, to "have acquainted me with this intention of "yours; and if money was to be raiſed to "pay any bodies debts, it ſhould be your "own, for I have expended a great deal of "money on you; but as that is paſt, and "now loſt for ever, I ſhall think nothing of "it: but I moſt do myſelf juſtice. The "money I laid out on your education and "other things I won't mind; but I am de-"termined to be paid the money which I ad-"vanced to take up the mortgage on your

"eſtate. Here is the account: and you ſee, "after making all allowances, there re- "mains five hundred forty-nine pounds, "ſeventeen ſhillings and ſix pence due to "me. Now, as it would diſtreſs you to "pay it all at once, I will conſent to "take it by ſeventy pounds a year, till "the whole is paid: and I think, in ho- "nour and juſtice, you cannot deny me "that. The good people whom you have "lent this money to, will, I have no "doubt of it, ſoon repay you; and then "you will he able to clear off my debt the "ſooner." She pauſed, waiting for an- ſwer, which Frank was not capable of giv- ing her. Finding him ſilent, ſhe added: "Another thing I will mention; that, as "your living here encreaſes my expence, "and you have a notion of going into the "world, you will ſee more of it any where "elſe than in this houſe.

He could hear it no longer. "The re- "ſpect and the veneration I have for you, "Madam," ſaid he, "and have ever had "ſince my tendereſt years; the obligations "I am under to you and the grateful ſenſe "of them ſhall never be effaced from my "heart. I will moſt readily ſubſcribe that

"agreement you propoſe, or any other. I "will alſo quit your houſe, ſorry that my "conduct has been ſo offenſive to you, as to "make my exile from it neceſſary to your "happineſs: but you will give me leave to "ſay, that whoever informed you of this "affair, was no friend to either of us.

"THAT is as it may turn out, Sir."

"IT is ſo: but I am entirely ignorant of "the perſon."

"So you ſhall remain. I ſhall be glad "to ſee you to-morrow to execute this agreement." She left him to his cogitations, and went up ſtairs.

THIS was a ſad reverſe of affairs for poor Wills, who had hitherto been nurſed in the ſoft lap of proſperity, and had ſeldom met any croſs accident. There was no oppoſing the ſtorm, or ſtemming the current of adverſe fortune. His cloaths and books were ſoon packed up: he left them ready for removal, and went off to London to ſecure an habitation for himſelf. He got a cheap lodging in a private ſtreet; and, lying there that night, went to his aunt in the morning, ſigned his agreement with her, and, taking his leave of her, put

his things into a coach, and came to London. Here we ſhall leave him for a while, endeavouring to reconcile himſelf to his fate: and, in the mean time, end this, and begin another chapter.

CHAPTER XXI.

In which the reader, if he has not a good memory, will be obliged to have recourſe to the firſt chapter of this hiſtory.

MAC Gregor, who now found the coaſt clear by the removal of young Wills, redoubled his aſſiduities, and was extremely well received by Miſs Kingley, who conſidered his taking the trouble of making thoſe enquiries after her nephew, as the ſtrongeſt proofs of his regard to her. He rejoiced in the ſucceſs of his ſcheme, and looked on her as tolerably ſecure. Mean while Wills went over to ſee Belton and his daughter, who were anxious about him, and concluded, his not coming to ſee them was owing to illneſs: but their fears were very agreeably removed by his preſence. He pleaded buſineſs of one kind or another to excuſe himſelf. He ſpent the day

with them: and, though he endeavoured to appear as chearful and unconcerned as poſſible, yet there was a gloom hung over his countenance, that all his attempts at mirth could not diſſipate. This was not ſo viſible to Belton, as to the penetrating eyes of Sophia; whoſe heart was deeply intereſted in every thing that concerned Wills. She repeatedly aſked him if he was well; ſeemed to hint he did not look ſo well as formerly; and ſtrove to be merry, in order to chear his ſpirits. He appeared pleaſed; and, upon enquiry, found that they had not heard from their relation in the country. In his way home, he could not help reſolving not to go ſo often as uſual to ſee them. "I cannot," ſaid he to himſelf, "for the ſoul of me, ſo effec-"tually conceal my grief and uneaſineſs, at "my preſent ſituation, but it is to be ſeen "through; and if they ſhould ever happen "to know that it is by aſſiſting them I ca-"me to forfeit my aunt's favour, it will "make them always unhappy: for that rea-"ſon, I will ſee them but ſeldom."

Now it was, when, left entirely to himſelf, that he lamented his not being brought up to ſome profeſſion, or inſtructed

in ſome ſcience. He praiſed that injunction of Mahomet's, which obliges every Grand Signior to be taught ſome handicraft trade, that in caſe he ſhould ever be depoſed, he may know how to get his bread, if he is reduced ſo low. But it might be commanded for another reaſon, in order to employ the mind of the monarch in a profitable manner for his ſubjects; and that, by knowing how much labour was beſtowed on the different articles neceſſary & uſeful in life, he ſhould ſpare the taxation of them.

Not being always able to amuſe himſelf with his books, he frequented a neighbouring coffeehouſe, where he ſoon picked up many acquaintances of his own age: but as they were generally too extravagant for his ſcheme of life, for he determined never to run in debt, he dropped moſt of them. However, there were two or three who, from a ſimilarity of circumſtances and temper, he ſelected, and made his friends. Of theſe Jack Allen and Tom Lawſon were the chief. Allen's father was a man of property in the north of England, and Jack his only ſon; but having been extravagant, in conſequence of his good nature and

the eaſineſs of his temper, the father refuſed to pay his bills; and Jack had lived in continual dread of the bailiffs for ſome months before that. This was an additional recommendation to Wills; who did all he could to aſſiſt him. Lawſon was dependent upon a mother, who little regarded him; but to whoſe jointure he muſt ſucceed on her death. In the mean time he "endured the bitter gripes of ſmarting po-"verty-" Wills, from the fifty pounds a year that was left him, could ill ſupply their wants; but, as far as he could, he was always ready and willing. He did not forget Belton and his daughter entirely. It was near a month ſince he had been there; and his inability to aſſiſt them, in caſe they ſhould have wanted any thing, prevented his going over to them ſooner. Upon his enquiring for them, he was informed they were gone away, and had left a letter for him: it was as follows.

"Sir.

"AS I have no other means of inform-"ing you of my ſituation, than by leav-"ing this letter for you, being unacquaint-"ed with your addreſs, I take this

"method to let you know, that I have re-
"ceived an invitation, in the moſt cordial
"and affectionate manner, from that rela-
"tion you heard me mention, to go and
"live with her. I go out of town to-mor-
"row morning, and ſhould have been hap-
"py in embracing my benefactor before I
"left London. Both Sophy and I lament
"exceedingly our being denied that plea-
"ſure, but hope you will let us know,
"now and then, as convenient to you,
"how you do. If I ſhould be once more
"proſperous in the world, it will give me
"infinite ſatisfaction to repay you thoſe
"ſums you ſo generouſly advanced for me:
"but we can do nothing elſe at preſent than
"offer up our prayers to the giver of all
"good things, to ſhower down his bleſ-
ſings on you, and to continue them long.
"Permit me to ſubſcribe myſelf,

"Your ever grateful
"and devoted ſervant,
"ROBERT BELTON."

HE found, by the date of the letter, that they had been gone near a fortnight: this pleaſed him much; for it removed them from beholding his neceſſities: and

it was out of his power to help them: he therefore thought this a lucky accident. However, he did not fail to acquaint them with the receipt of their letter, and assure them of his friendship and regard.

Much as he had suffered from his attention and readiness to serve the needy and distressed, it did not at all prevent him from exercising his humanity as far as his narrow circumstances would admit. Walking one afternoon in one of the new streets at the outskirts of London, he heard the sound of hasty steps after him: he turned about, and saw, at a little distance behind him, an elderly man, but poorly dressed, who had nevertheless an air of gentility, which appeared through his tattered habit. Curiosity induced him to turn about: and when he had satisfied himself who it was that followed him, he pursued his course. As he walked but slowly, the person before described, soon overtook him. He joined him, and, pulling off his hat, entreated his pardon for addressing him. Wills returned his salute, and told him he should he glad to know how he could serve him. "Sir," said the stranger, "I hope "you will not be offended at my speaking

"to you; but neceſſity compels me to it. "I have had the honour of bearing his "majeſty's commiſſion. I ſerved all the "laſt war, I was in ſuch a regiment, was "at St. Cas at the unfortunate deſcent there. "I was in America, and in ſeveral other "places. My commanders can give ample "teſtimonies of my behaviour. I received "five wounds, and have ſhed my blood in "the ſervice of my king and country. But "when the peace was concluded, the regi- "ment that I belonged to was reduced; and "my half-pay was all I had to ſupport a "wife and four children. I experienced ma- "ny wants, and have been driven to many "ſhifts, before I could thus ſubmit to aſk "for charity. It was the day before yeſter- "day that I ſold the lace off my laſt coat, "to procure food for my infants. I made "bold to tell you my unhappy ſituation.

"MAKE no apology, Sir," ſaid Wills, his heart burſting with anguiſh at the recital of the ſtory, told with a great deal of ſimplicity, and by a man whoſe conſcious pride and honour prevented his ſpeech, and almoſt choaked his utterance: "I would to "God my abilities were equal to my wiſhes "to ſerve you. They are not: but if you

"will meet me at ſeven o'clock to morrow "evening at ſuch a coffee-houſe, we may "think of ways and means of doing ſome-"thing to extricate you from your imme-"diate diſtreſs. In the mean time, Sir, do "me the favour to accept of this trifle. I have but four ſhillings in my pocket, and "there are three of them."

"Sir," returned the officer, "I thank "you; and leſt you ſhould think me an "impoſtor, though my lodgings are not "far off, if you will do me the honour to "go with me there, I will convince you of "the truth of what I ſay."

"No, Sir, I cannot go now; but I ſhall "hope to meet you to morrow evening."

"You ſhall, Sir;" and taking his leave very politely, he departed, leaving poor Wills very much dejected from ſuch a diſagreeable rencounter.

He could not help thinking it particularly hard, that an officer who had ſpent his youth, and perhaps his fortune, in the ſervice of his country, ſhould be left deſtitute in his old age, with the additional miſery of ſeing a wife and children ſtarving

along with him: he lamented, that he had ſo little money in his pocket; and was angry with himſelf, that he did not give him all he had. Theſe thoughts employed him till he returned to the coffee-houſe to read the papers, and the diſcourſe happening to turn upon objects of charity, Wills related what had befallen him, only concealing what he had given. "Sir," ſaid a ſagacious old fellow, who nevertheleſs did not ſeem to have much humanity in his compoſition, and who was ſitting in a corner of the room, "had not this officer "an old blue coat on?" and went on deſcribing the particulars of his perſon and dreſs.

Wills anſwered, "he wore ſuch things."

"Well then, young gentleman, this "ſame officer told me the ſame ſtory a "year and a half ago; and I'll engage he "picks up a very good livelihood by it: "but officers are his particular prey: they "aſſiſt him liberally, and I believe the "fellow is an hypocrite and an impoſtor."

"Ah, Sir," ſaid Wills, "judge not ſo "hardly of him; he bore all the marks of

"real diſtreſs, and to morrow evening he "is to meet me here."

If he does," replied the other, "I will "alter my opinion of him; but be aſſured "he will not: thoſe marks of diſtreſs are "eaſily aſſumed."

Wills was much ſurprized when he found that no officer came. The old gentleman was waiting alſo there to ſee the iſſue of his prediction, which he found verified. "I believe, Sir," ſaid Wills, "you were right: but I ſhould be very "ſorry to think that, becauſe a man may "be impoſed upon two or three times, he "ſhould ſuppoſe all in diſtreſs are impoſ-"tors, and refuſe to aſſiſt them." Thus ended that adventure, and yet Wills did not at all find himſelf leſs ſuſceptible of the calls of humanity.

His friend Allen now ſtood in need of it. His circumſtances grew more deſperate; and when he ventured abroad, it was in manifeſt danger of his liberty. In a cabinet council that was held at Wills's lodgings, it was reſolved upon, that he ſhould go down to the country to his father, who might be ſoftened into compaſ-

ſion by his preſence: but how he ſhould go was the queſtion. He had a journey of near two hundred miles to take and not a ſhilling in his pocket. Wills, whoſe whole ſtock was ſome what leſs than four guineas, offered it to him; and propoſed travelling with the waggon, as the cheapeſt and moſt private method. This was alſo agreed on, and Tom Lawſon and Wills accompanied him to the inn where the waggon was to put up the firſt night, and where our reader found them thoroughly wet in the firſt chapter of this moſt delightful hiſtory. And as they have been aſleep for a long while, it is high time to waken ſome of them.

CHAPTER XXII.

Reaſons offered why this ſhould be conſidered and conſequently read, as the third chapter of this hiſtory. WILLS's *journey; the accident that befel him, and the conſequence of it.*

WE have now given our reader a full account of Frank Wills and his companions, whom we introduced him to ſo very abruptly in the beginning of this hiſto-

ry. But if he ſhould be diſpleaſed at being carried ſuch around-about way, he may ſkip over all the intermediate chapters between the ſecond and the latter end of the one preceding this, and will learn, that it was only to accompany a friend that he got ſo heartly wet, and walked ſo far. And in this practice of boldly plunging into the middle of affairs, we are ſupported by the authority of the moſt reſpectable names of antiquity; no leſs than Homer, and his ſucceſſor in bays, Virgil. It was their cuſtom to ſet the reader down in the midſt of the tumults and hurry of the work, and let him get out as he could, though it muſt be confeſſed they helped him a little: and for this reaſon is it, that ſome ſchoolmaſters, and in particular he, who had the honour of inſtructing the laborious author of theſe never enough to be admired memoirs, make their boys read the ſecond and third Æneids of Virgil, before they touch on the firſt. If our courteous reader has a mind to comply with this cuſtom, he need only inſtead of chapter *twenty-two*, call this chapter *three*, and purſue the hiſtory.

About three o'clock in the morning, Allen, who lay in the ſame room with

Wills, was awakened by the waggoner; and Wills having given him all the money in his pocket except ſix ſhillings, he ſhook hands with him and Lawſon, and bad them farewell. He departed, and they compoſed themſelves to ſleep, which they enjoyed till ſeven o'clock, when they roſe in order to return to town. A more charming morning was never ſeen: and the proſpect of an agreeable walk, compenſated for the trouble and fatigue of the preceding evening: but the waters were out, and the whole country ſeemed almoſt overflowed: ſo heavy a fall of rain had not been known for a long time. However, our travellers ſet forward, and finding a path in the fields, that the heat of the ſun had dried a little, they purſued their courſe. Their converſation turned chiefly upon poor Allen, who had left them; and the were not ſparing in their good wiſhes for his ſucceſs. As the high road ran through a hollow way between two little hills, on one of which was the path they kept, they could ſee the road for a good way before them, and perceived a poſt-chaiſe at a little diſtance, in which were three women, approaching to a very large and rapid ſtream

of water that ran acroſs the road. They had juſt entered it as Wills and his companion drew near it on the other ſide; but they ſecured their paſſage by a wooden bridge that was thrown over it in that part of the fields. The horſe who was in the ſhafts was very young and ſkittiſh, and finding the ſtream of water bear ſo hard againſt him, was frightened, and began to rear and plunge. The horſe on which the driver rode, who did not ſeem poſſeſſed of much ſkill or cleverneſs, was terrified at the noiſe and ſplaſhing of the water, and began to be reſty too. The ladies, who had reaſon to be apprehenſive of danger, cried out; and as the water then ran through the bottom of the chaiſe, they held their feet up againſt the front of it, to prevent their being wetted. Wills ſaw there was manifeſt danger: and if the carriage had been overſet, nothing leſs than a miracle could have ſaved their lives. "Lawſon," ſaid he, "let us ſave thoſe poor girls from "being drowned: follow me." He ruſhed down the hill ſwift as lightning, and, ſpringing over the fence and a broad ditch, plunged into the water to the door of the chaiſe, which he inſtantly opened. Seizing the

lady who was next to him, he desired her without ceremony to trust herself to him, which she did; and he soon conveyed her to dry land. He again returned, and desiring the next lady to make use of his arm, he took her, and soon placed her by her companion. Lawson, who was by this time at his back, took the other lady in his arms, and restored her in safety to her friends.

Wills was entirely engaged with his fair charge, whom he still held in his arms: for through extreme terror or apprehension, she fainted away. And Wills, in his condition, dropping wet, was but badly qualified to hold her: but he could not for his soul think of parting with her from his embrace. She was, as were the other two ladies, in mourning, which only served to set off the transparent whiteness of her skin in a more advantageous manner. Her shape was exquisitely fine. Her limbs, which Wills, in the disorder he took her from the carriage, had an opportunity of observing, were formed in the most elegant proportion. Her snowy bosom, that rose tumultuously beneath the gauze that shadowed it, as she recovered, created unknown, and hitherto unexperienced transports in the

breaſt of Wills. The ghaſtly paleneſs of death had ſpread over her countenanae during her fit, from which ſhe was ſoon recovered by the aſſiduities of her aunt and couſin, who were her companions. But when ſhe opened her eyes languid as the were from her illneſs, they ſhewed ſuch glories to Wills, that he ſurrendered an heart, he could no longer maintain poſſeſſion of, to her. When ſhe came a little to herſelf, ſhe gently diſengaged herſelf from the arms of the ſtranger who held her. The recollection of her ſituation with him, tinged her cheeks with a faint bluſh, and heightened thoſe beauties that were but too powerful for him before. Mrs. Kelſal, for that was the aunt's name, was the firſt who was compoſed enough to return the gentlemen thanks for their humanity and bravery, in venturing their own lives for the preſervation of theirs. Miſs Harcourt, who was the lady that Wills took ſuch a delight in beholding, joined in the compliment in ſo genteel and polite a manner, with ſuch propriety and grace, that he conceived as good an opinion of her underſtanding, as he had expreſſed admiration at her beauty. His reply was ſuch as contributed alſo to give

her a favourable notion of her deliverer. "Humanity, Madam, firſt induced me to "go to your aſſiſtance; and I am truly "happy in having reſcued ſo much beauty "from any diſaſter. To effect it, I would "riſque my life at any time." While he ſpoke, ſhe could not avoid taking notice of the perſon who addreſſed her. His figure, as the reader has been acquainted before, was ſuch as might inſpire love; and his eyes were animated with extraordinary vivacity, while he ſpoke to her. The other ladies were paying at that time their compliments to Lawſon, when Wills informed them that the carriage had paſſed the ford, and that he would conduct them through the fields to the road where they might rejoin it. At this time their ſervant on horſeback came up, who had ſtaid behind upon ſome occaſion or other; and he was deſired to follow the chaiſe, and prepare it for their reception, while they walked round.

LAWSON took Mrs. Kelſal and her daughter under his protection; while Wills followed with Miſs Harcourt, who expreſſed great fears for his health, in conſequence of the wetting he had got, and begged

him to go to ſome place where he might have an opportunity of drying himſelf, and not take the trouble to go along with them, who could get the chaiſe very well. He aſſured her that he preferred her ſafety to his own health; and that he would rather ſpend thoſe moments in her company, than procure his own convenience. "I "ſhall part from you in a few minutes, "Madam," ſaid he; "but I ſhall retain "the remembrance of you while I exiſt: "will you favour me with your name, and "let me know where I may have the hap-"pineſs of ſeeing you again. Perhaps, "if you will permit me, I may have the "honour of aſſuring you of my affection "and paſſion."

"I cannot refuſe that ſmall favour to a "gentleman who has rendered me ſo ſignal "a ſervice. My name is Juliet Harcourt: "my father lives near Nantwich; and I "am ſure he will be very glad to ſee a "gentleman who has ſaved his daughter's "life."

"THANKS, ten thouſand thanks, for this "favour: but will you excuſe my pre-"ſumption, if I ſhould aſk you another

"queſtion. Is your heart or your hand "engaged, that, ſhould I aſpire at the honour of obtaining either, I might have "an equal chance of ſucceſs with any body "elſe?"

"I will alſo anſwer that queſtion," replied the adorable Juliet, with a ſmile of ineffable complacency; "It is not."

"May I be permitted to hope?"

"I ſhall be glad to ſee you, Sir, at "Nantwich."

They were now arrived at the carriage that was to ſeparate them. Lawſon had already put the two ladies in. Wills preſſed Juliet's hand in his, while he ſtood waiting to perform the ſame office for her. She looked up to him, to return him thanks again for his kindneſs, and ſaw a tear ſtand in his eye: her ſpeech was checked. She permitted him to hand her into the chaiſe, and he pulled off his hat and bowed to them, without ſpeaking a word. They kiſſed their hands, as the poſt-boy, cracking his whip, drove off.

Wills purſued the carriage with his eyes: he was rooted to the ſpot on which

he ſtood. Lawſon ſpoke to him. His ſenſes were too much abſorbed, in thinking on the lovely object he had juſt parted from, to be able to attend to any thing elſe. His friend did not like ſtanding ſtill in his wet cloaths. Wills never felt the leaſt inconvenience by it: Lawſon, by giving him an hearty ſhake, drew him from his reverie, which was very pleaſing, and which good office he was not very thankful for. "What "is the matter, Tom?"

"I am ſhivering with cold in my wet "cloaths, while you are gaping after that "chaiſe: I wiſh you would let us walk on "to the top of the hill, to dry ourſelves, "and get a dram."

"I believe it will be neceſſary," replied Wills, "and I'll accompany you;" which he accordingly did.

But it is neceſſary to inform the reader, that the carriage that bore away his heart, had juſt ſunk beneath a hill, and he loſt ſight of it; or elſe he would not have complied ſo readily with his companion's propoſal of walking forward. They proceeded at a good round pace, and ſoon reached the houſe at the top of the hill, where they

procured ſome refreſhment; and having dried themſelves, purſued their journey, without any other accident happening. But Wills's whole converſation turned on his charming Juliet: he indulged himſelf in the hopes of obtaining her hand, as he conjectured he was not diſagreeable to her, from what ſhe had ſaid to him. He formed the moſt impracticable ſchemes, and entertained, at that moment, the moſt romantic notions, that ever enamorato harboured. Frequently did he demand Lawſon's opinion of her, and aſk him, if ever he had ſeen any thing half ſo lovely. It was in vain for him to ſay he had: for Wills found out new charms in her, every moment that he thought of her. They had, by this time, walked ten miles without ever ſtopping; and Lawſon, who happened not to be ſo much ſtruck with the lady whoſe deliverer he had been, began to feel a vulgar appetite, called hunger, grow very troubleſome, and propoſed to his fellow traveller to bait. This Wills was extremely indifferent about, till the other told him, it was abſolutely neceſſary for his conſtitution, who was not in love, to ſatisfy his appetite with more ſubſtantial

food than the thoughts of his miſtreſs. They climbed up the hill to Highgate, and approaching one of thoſe hoſpitable manſions which declare, by their ſigns that they afford entertainment for both man and horſe, ſome cold boiled beef was ſecured, of which they both eat very heartily: for Wills, though he never thought of the neceſſity of eating till he ſaw the beef, did not fail to ſhew the goodneſs of his appetite. This meal they waſhed down with humble porter, and, in a ſhort time, arrived at their reſpective habitations: and when they had ſupped together, Lawſon retired to take ſome reſt after his walk; and Wills, when he went to bed could only think of his dear Juliet.

CHAPTER XXIII.

WILLS's paſſion encreaſes. A letter. A ſtrange reſolution, and how put in execution.

WHEN he awoke in the morning, after ſleeping very ſoundly, which is a great ſoleciſm in the conduct of a man in love, he began to recollect himſelf. He found

the traces of the adventure of the preceding day ſtill in his brain; and he was but too ſenſible, for his own peace, that the image of that charming girl was deeply engraven on his heart, and that ſhe had already taken ſuch an hold, that ſhe could not be eaſily eradicated. The aſſurance that ſhe had given him that ſhe was not engaged, afforded him ſome hopes; but when he reflected on his preſent ſituation, they all died away. It was to be ſuppoſed that ſhe was a girl of fortune, or family; in either caſe he could make no pretenſions, if pecuniary qualifications were requiſite. Then firſt it was, that he repined at his want of fortune, or thought his aunt uſed him ill. In the midſt of theſe reflections, Lawſon came in upon him, and joking him for being ſo lazy, Wills, to excuſe himſelf, told him the ſubject of his contemplations. Lawſon owned that ſhe was a lovely creature, and flattered Wills highly, by telling him, that ſhe ſeemed very well pleaſed with him. For three or four days Wills indulged himſelf in thinking on the beauteous object of his deſires; but, at laſt, he began to wiſh to ſee her; to hear her ſpeak; to know her

ſentiments concerning him: but how to effect this, was a matter not eaſily determined. Some days were alſo neceſſary to ſettle that. But he was interrupted by a letter from Allen. It was addreſſed both to Wills and Lawſon, and ran thus:

"How comes it that footpads vile, "ſhould dare to ſolicit the countenance "and correſpondance of one infinitely ſu- "perior, one who has been ſo much ex- "alted above every traveller on the road, "(for I don't find, that there was a paſ- "ſenger in any of the waggons beſides "myſelf) that they all looked up at him "with aſtoniſhment; one, who was con- "ſidered as a ſuperior kind of being at "every caſtle that was honoured with his "nocturnal reſidence. Can he degrade "himſelf ſo very low, as to hold commu- "nion with peripateticks baſe? Forbid it "dignity! Forbid it pride!"

"Hark ye, my worthy friends, this ex- "ordium, ſomething in the manner and "ſtile of my old friend ancient Piſtol, was "conceived in my carriage, where the al- "titude of my ſituation inſpired proportion- "ate ideas: but now that I am deſcended

"from thence, my ſtile ſhall tumble down
"after me, whilſt I, in humble phraſe,
"a round unvarniſhed tale deliver.

"When I left you, my good lads, I
"mounted with an heavy heart; and, as I
"was never fond of indulging melancholy
"reflections, endeavoured to burry them in
"ſleep: but this the noiſe and motion of
"the carriage forbad. Thus ſituated, I
"was dragged four and twenty miles in half
"the number of hours. At firſt, I imag-
"ined that the weight of my ſpirits re-
"tarded the progreſs of the vehicle, but I
"find I was miſtaken; for, by the moſt
"accurate obſervation, it appears, that we
"have proceeded with the ſame exact de-
"gree of velocity all the way, though my
"ſpirits have become conſiderably lighter.
"I expected to have found an agreeable
"companion in my friend Robin the driver;
"but there I was miſtaken too: he has not
"been guilty of one pleaſantry ſince we met,
"except a certain facetious queſtion he puts
"to me at leaſt twenty times a day, viz.
"Pray, Sir, what o'clock was it, at this
"time yeſterday? This, though hackneyed
"worſe than the horſe he rides, ſtill affords
"him infinitely more ſatisfaction and enter-

"tainment than it does me, if I may judge "from the immoderate laughter that accom- "panies it.

As the occurrences of any one day will "give you a repreſentation of the whole "journey, being invariably the ſame, take "the following. At two, three, or four "o'clock in the morning, I am called up, "when I generally begin the day with a "breach of my duty as a chriſtian, diſcharg- "ing a volley of damns at the unfortunate "wight who diſturbs me. We never ſtop "five minutes from the time we ſet out in the morning, until we arrive at our inn "at night. This is attended with one good "conſequence, namely, the ſaving of din- "ner; an expence that, in the preſent ſtate "of my finances, would be intolerable: "but this loſs is made up amply indeed at "ſupper, where, if we have not elegance "and delicacy, we have ſubſtantial plenty. "Certain buttocks and rumps of beef, huge "limbs of gigantic mutton, and ſundry "diſhes of divers kinds of garden ſtuff, "furniſh out this nocturnal repaſt; which "we waſh down with frequent potations of "ale. We all ſup together with the family "of the houſe at ſeven o'clock; and till

"nine the converſation is very brilliant, en-
"livened with divers interludes of muſic
"vocal. And here, to my great aſtoniſh-
"ment, I found, that a decent ſtroke of
"ſmut (I might with propriety have ſaid
"*indecent*) gave no offence to my landla-
"dy, her daughters, nieces, ſervant girls,
"(maids I had almoſt ſaid) their huſbands,
"ſons, brothers, &c. Thus we ſpend the
"day, Sirs; and the nights, the beſt way
"we can. But let me tell you, this me-
"thod being totally new to me, I don't
"much reliſh it: wherefore I generally take
"a ſtretch of three or four miles a-head, and
"refreſh myſelf with a meridian at ſome
"good houſe, where I wait 'till I am over-
"taken again. Here ends my journal: and
"now, lads, prepare to hear ſomething,
"which, if it ſurprizes you as much as it
"has me, will make ye ſtare. Know then,
"that, to the eternal mortification of my
"vanity, I have not been able — would ye
"believe it? — to accompliſh a ſingle amour
"the whole way. I depended upon ſome
"aſſiſtance from Robin, but he is not one
"of Dame Venus's votaries, and indeed if
"he pays adoration to any deity whatever,
"it is to Plutus. You cannot imagine how

"this diſappointment has lowered me in my "own opinion. I, who have been ſuc- "ceſsful with every rank and degree, from "nobility down to the loweſt of the ſex, "to be rejected with diſdain by every little "country wench: inſupportable! Pray hea- "ven that I may find my own country "laſſes leſs cruel: if not, I don't know "what may be the conſequence.

"As I have ſome paper, and a good deal "of time to ſpare to day, I think I cannot "employ them better than in telling Law- "ſon a ſtory. An Engliſhman, a Scotch- "man, and an Iriſhman, travelling toge- "ther, a diſpute aroſe which country "produced the beſt poets: each ſtrenuouſly "ſupported the ſuperiority of his own. "The Engliſhman declared in favour of "one Mr. Milton; the Scotchman, of one "Mr. Allan Ramſay; and the Iriſhman, of "one Mr. Caroline's Devotions. After much "altercation, they agreed at laſt ſeverally "to repeat an extempore ſtanza of their "own compoſition, and in that manner de- "cide it. The Engliſhman began,

Rejoice, Tom Hewit, rejoice
And eke thou mayor of Coventree,
For honeſt queen Beaſs
Once coom to this place
For to zee wee,

"THE Caledonian followed him.

As I cam paſt the pier o'Leith,
And through Edenbro'ugh toon,
Aw the laſſes they did cry
The lorde be wi' you Andro!

"THIS (though laſt, not leaſt) the Hi-"bernian's."

When I liveth in the county Mayo,
I courted young Sheelah Mc Dermor,
And ſhe ſwore upon the book, I was the pret-
tyeſt young lad
That lived in the whole county or city of Cork.

"THESE I think three of the happieſt "ſpecimens I ever met with, eſpecially if "the accent and manner peculiar to each "be well preſerved in the repetition. The "controverſy, however, was not yet de-"cided, as no one would allow his to be "inferior to the reſt; they therefore re-"ſolved unanimouſly to leave it to the de-"ciſion of the firſt Welchman they met; "but what the reſult of that was, I have "never been able to diſcover. I know that "Lawſon boaſts of having ſome of the "blood of Cadwallader in his veins. I wiſh "you and he would lay your heads together, "and hammer out a ſample of Welch ver-"ſification to cut all three down.

Friday night.

"I have at laſt finiſhed my journey, "*numquam mihi obliviſcendus;* *) and in the "intervals of my peregrination, I amuſed "myſelf, and endeavoured to divert you. "I am doubtful how I ſhall be received "by my father. As the prodigal ſon is "returned, I hope he'll kill a fatted calf. "In a day or two I ſhall ſee him. I know "you wiſh me ſucceſs, and you ſhall hear "it. Yours, ſeperately and conjointly,

JOHN ALLEN."

AFTER indulging themſelves in a hearty laugh at their friend's epiſtle, and renewing their good wiſhes for his ſucceſs, it came into Wills's head, that he might contrive to be conveyed in ſome ſuch cheap and humourous manner into the neighbourhood of Miſs Harcourt. He could not help communicating his notions to Lawſon; who thought the ſcheme vere feaſible, and offered to accompany him, promiſing himſelf much diverſion by putting it in execution. "Beſides," added he, "you will be "able to penetrate more into the reality "of her ſentiments concerning you, than

*) Never to be forgotten by me.

"if you went down in an equipage. Let "us assume a character a little foreign to "our own, and we shall see better how "the land lies, than by appearing in any "other manner." Lawson's approbation determined Wills; and how they proceeded, shall be treated of in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A journey begun; its progress, and the adventures our heroes met with.

WILLS knew extremely well, that there was to possibility of undertaking this journey without a proper supply of money; and very judiciously considering that his living in a strange country would be expensive, he resolved to delay his expedition, till he received his supplies, which would happen in three weeks or thereabouts: then his half year's payment became due. In the interim, his imagination was entirely filled with the idea of his dear Juliet: and frequent were the conferences he held with his trusty friend and ally, Lawson. In these, the whole plan

was laid down, and many a charming ſcene preſented itſelf to their lively imaginations. At length, the wiſh'd-for day, long expected, arrived. Wills received his five-and twenty pounds, and Lawſon had about five guineas. However, there were ſome trifles which it was abſolutely neceſſary that Wills ſhould pay, which reduced his ſtock to twenty pounds; they provided themſelves with neceſſary linen, which they encloſed in a portmanteau common to them both, and took the precaution to ſend it by ſome of the ſtages which went part of the way, that they might meet it in a proper place again.

With a light heart and good ſpirits Wills ſet out, accompanied by his friend. He had already anticipated, in his enraptured imagination, the joy he ſhould feel on the ſight of his beloved Juliet. The thought winged his feet, and he walked ſo faſt, that Lawſon was obliged to call to ſtop ſeveral times, before he heard him; ſo deeply was he engaged in thinking of his charmer. At laſt he heard, and complied with his friend's deſire in ſlackening his pace; who aſſured him, though eſteemed a good walker, he muſt decline going

along with him, if he walked at ſuch a rate. Wills, to make amends for his leaving him behind, acquainted him with the ſtate of his thoughts at that moment, and the uneaſineſs and doubts he laboured under as well concerning the reception he ſhould meet with from her, as how he ſhould be treated by her father: and Lawſon not having heard any thing of his hiſtory, Wills related to him, without reſerve, every particular of his life. He met a comforter in Lawſon, who was much more ſanguine in his temper than Wills. He propheſied that he would be again re-inſtated in his aunt's good graces; and did not doubt, but Mac Gregor was the man who informed Miſs Kingley of his having raiſed the money. Wills ſeemed to think ſo too; but he could not conceive how it was poſſible for him to come at the knowledge of the tranſaction. His companion poſitively inſiſted, that it could be no body elſe. During this diſpute, they arrived at the brook, now an inconſiderable ſtream, where Wills firſt ſaw his adorable Juliet. Here he ſtopped and indulged the moſt pleaſing reveries; he alſo quitted the road, and went up into the path from whence

he firſt beheld their diſtreſs. His imagination attentive to one object, repreſented the ſcene over again to him; and he ſaw, or thought he ſaw, the carriage in a like dangerous ſituation. As he kept his eyes fixed upon the ſpot, reviewing, in his mind's eye, the tranſactions that were paſſed, he was rouſed from his waking dream by a loud laugh. He returned his eyes to the ſpot whence the ſound proceeded, and found Lawſon amuſing himſelf, by laughing heartily at his expence. This induced an enquiry of the cauſe of his mirth, which Lawſon very honeſtly declared to be himſelf; and then, imitating the poſture in which he ſtood fixed, and the looks he had aſſumed, he even forced a ſmile from Wills himſelf. "Well," ſaid he, "though I confeſs my demeanour might "have been very ridiculous, yet at that mo-"ment I experienced the moſt delightful "ſenſations. Your boſom is a ſtranger to "the moſt pleaſing inhabitant that can dwell "in it, pure and virtuous love. Tell me "Lawſon, do you know what love is?"

"Not *that* you talk of," anſwered his friend.

"WHAT other?"

"I can beſt explain that to you, by tel-
"ling my ſtory. Not many months ago,
"as I was walking in the Park, a woman
"caught my eye: ſhe was remarkably
"handſome, and finely ſhaped: I thought
"too, in my turn, that ſhe did not ob-
"ſerve me with an eye of indifference;
"and determined to find out where ſhe
"lived. I followed her into one of the
"principal trading ſtreets in the city, where
"I found her huſband kept a little ſhop.
"I repaſſed the door ſoon after, but ſhe
"was not to be ſeen. In the afternoon I
"returned, and ſhe was ſtanding in the
"ſhop. In I went, under pretence of
"cheapening ſome things. As her huſband
"was not in the way, ſhe aſſiſted the per-
"ſon who ſtood behind the counter, and
"recommended ſome trifling things to me,
"which I took: however, in the choice
"of them, I was engaged a long time,
"and made myſelf remarkable to her.
"The next day I ſaw her in the Park
"again, with another lady. Determined
"to addreſs her, and conſcious that by
"modeſty alone I ſhould not avail myſelf,
"I deſired Allen, who was along with me,
"to faſten on the other; and I attached

"myſelf to the lady. The converſation at "firſt was general; but my ally began to "be particular, and gave me liberty to "tell my Roxana what I felt for her; to "aſſure her of the power of her charms; "and in very paſſionate terms declared, "that my life was dependent on her ſmiles. "I met with a repulſe, as I expected; but "Lucretia could not have treated me with "more haughty diſdain, and exclaim againſt "my preſumption more than ſhe did: and "every attempt to deprecate her rage and "anger was ineffectual. I attended her to the gate which led from the Park: and "expreſſing a wiſh to meet her the next day, "and taking leave of her in the moſt ſub-"miſſive manner, we parted; but ſhe "turned her head away, nor would ſhe "ſpeak to, or even look at me. For all "this, I did not give her over. Importu-"nity and opportunity ſucceed always with "the women: the former I determined "ſhould not be wanting, however the lat-"ter was. For two days ſhe did not make her appearance in the Park; but I was "both evenings to be ſeen parading before "her windows, and always ſaw her. The "great number of people paſſing and re-

"paſſing through the ſtreet continually,
"prevented my being taken much notice
"of: however, I did not eſcape her. The
"next day ſhe appeared again in the Park,
"attended by her former companion. Allen
"ſeized her as before, whilſt I attempted
"this impregnable fort. Again I told my
"paſſion; again I was repulſed, with op-
"probrious terms. Her anger heightened
"her charms, and her reſiſtance made her
"more deſirable. When I found ſhe would
"not liſten to a poſitive declaration of my
"paſſion, I turned the diſcourſe into a
"more general channel; and then we all
"partook of the converſation. It was not
"diſpleaſing to her; and for ſome weeks,
"a long time I'll aſſure you, ſhe held
"out: but we met every day, and ſhe
"began to liſten to me with more plea-
"ſure than before. At laſt ſhe conſent-
"ed to go on a party with me, a few
"miles out of town. It was ſtipulated,
"that Allen and her friend were to ac-
"company us, to take off all ſuſpicion.
"The day was fixed, and away we went:
"all was jollity and rapture. I could wiſh
"for my own ſake, more than hers, to
"conceal the latter part of the adventure:

"she had mercenary views in the appoint-
"ment, mingled with a little desire. I
"complied with her terms; and despising
"her in my heart for selling herself, took
"advantage of her ignorance of legal
"forms; giving her nevertheless, all she
"required from me, and she surrendered
"herself up. We continued this inter-
"course till she got a richer lover, or was
"tired: and so, as we met we parted."

"And pray," said Wills, "how could
"you have the assurance to address a mar-
"ried woman, upon such a footing?"

"Very well: for there is always so-
"me token of encouragement, or a man
"would drop the pursuit that is fruitless.
"Her tongue, at the moment she repulsed
"me, belied her heart: and had she not
"sold herself, which was really her inten-
"tion, though not successful, I should
"have been fond of her still.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Wills,
"can there be such woman? And she re-
"turned thus contaminated to her hus-
"band."

"Aye to be sure," replied Lawson,

"and made him believe ſhe was very fond "of him."

"'Tis dreadful! But ſure there are ſome "good," ſaid Wills; "elſe why has nature "implanted this deſire of poſſeſſing women "in our breaſts? We naturally fly from a "ſnake, and we dread that which is hurt- "ful to us: yet can any thing be more de- "ſtructive and obnoxious, than a woman "who thus ſtrays from her duty, and "brings home pollution to her wretched "huſband's arms, and deſtruction to his "peace.

"Truly," ſaid Lawſon, this is an "ominous converſation to be commenced "with a man who is deeply in love, and "haſtening into the trammels of matri- "mony as faſt as he can; and eſpecially "when argument and experience make both "ſo much againſt the fairer ſex.

"I won't believe it," ſaid Wills. "The "happineſs that ariſes to us in this world "is much ſuperior, and more plentifully "dealt out to us, than miſery or misfor- "tunes: the latter we always make for "ourſelves, the former is made for us. "We have it in our power to enjoy it if

"we pleaſe: but we loath pleaſure ſo eaſ-
"ily procured, and take a great deal of
"trouble to acquire woe and pain.—I
"had rather

Exult in all the good of all mankind,

"than, by indulging a partial view, ſee
"nothing but what ſhould make me re-
"pine at my ſtate, and curſe my exiſtence.
"We ſuffer enough from the infirmities
"which the fleſh is natural heir to, and
"ought not to add a mental depravity to
"the load. We ſhould reconcile ourſelves
"as much as poſſible to this ſituation, by
receiving the agreeable part of it with
"joy, and bearing the contrary with pa-
"tience: therefore, I cannot join with
"you Lawſon, in your opinion. That
"there may be women who are bad, and,
"when ſo, are worſe than men, from phy-
"ſical reaſons, I will not deny; but that
"the majority of them are ſo, I will ab-
"ſolutely contradict. The advocates on
"both ſides the queſtion make their own
"caſes appear bright at the expence of
"truth."

THIS, and ſimilar converſation, brought them both very tired to the houſe where

they were to ſleep that night. As they travelled on foot, they put up at ſuch houſes on the road, (for though we have not hitherto mentioned it, they did not forget to eat and drink when impelled by hunger or thirſt,) as beſt ſuited their appearance, and the manner in which they purſued their journey; it was therefore at a comfortable houſe, that promiſed good entertainment, they reſted: nor were they deceived in their notions. The landlady, who was a very pretty, ſmart, neat woman, took particular care of her gueſts, and prepared their ſupper with much alacrity and cleanlineſs: She alſo took care that they had clean ſheets, and inſpected the making of their beds herſelf, not truſting to her maids. The landlord, according to laudable cuſtom, and for the better forwarding the conſumption of liquor in his own houſe, not that he ever ſtinted himſelf any where, ſwallowed large potations of his own ale, on which he beſtowed great, and we may juſtly add, many merited praiſes. The landlady was alſo requeſted to partake of a bowl of punch, with which they were ſolacing themſelves. To this her huſband objected: but was

overruled by Lawſon, who obſerved, that as there was no company in the houſe, ſhe might favour them with her converſation for a little while. My good dame obeyed the meſſage by the waiter, and inſtantly came to them. Lawſon would not have ſtrained his civility ſo far as to have both huſband and wife at once, if he had not perceived certain indications from her behaviour, that ſhe was not one of thoſe hard-hearted females, who, like the heroines of old, would let a man hang or drown himſelf, before they would grant even a look to ſave him. Wills was too much engaged in the contemplation of his amiable miſtreſs, to perceive theſe diagnoſtics: or indeed, if he had, would he have taken any advantage of them: he, with an obſtinate and fooliſh perſeverance contending, that a man could never love a woman truly, who ſo far forgot her, as to admit another to his arms? Lawſon had quite different notions, and began to rejoice at the opportunity that offered itſelf; and conceived very favourably of the iſſue of the adventure, when he found the landlord jealous of her, and averſe to her coming into their company. Theſe impe-

diments encreaſed his deſire of atchieving ſome exploits, and made him ſo earneſt to have her introduced. He certainly, and we are ſorry to ſay it, ſurveyed her with an eye of deſire; and ſhe, entirely regardleſs of his civilities, was captivated with Wills, whom ſhe beheld with much pleaſure. Theſe looks, pro and con, did not eſcape the huſband; who ſat in a ſtate of anxiety and ſuſpence. Former transgreſſions had taught him the foible of his wife's conſtitution, and he watched her very narrowly. Lawſon, though an handſome and agreeable man, was by no means comparable to Wills, and though the landlord was fearful of them both, yet the attention his wife paid to Wills alarmed him moſt. Lawſon, who ſaw through his uneaſineſs, wanting to augment it, and finding that the grey mare was the better horſe, and that he dared not ſay a word in her preſence, paid her many compliments, and by appealing to Wills, forced him to join in her praiſe. This was very agreeable flattery to her, and ſhe plumed herſelf upon it accordingly. The landlord who was ignorant where this extraordinary courteſy on both ſides would end, and

predicting that it foreboded him no good, knew not what to do. About this period the bowl was out, and Lawſon hinted his deſire to have ſome more. Wills would have excuſed himſelf. The landlord, who, at any other time, would not have waited for a ſecond bidding, and whoſe intereſt and honour were at that time maintaining a ſtrong combat in his boſom, adviſed the gentlemen to go to bed, as he was ſure they muſt be fatigued after ſo long a walk, and that reſt was moſt neceſſary for them. This diſintereſted declaration, ſo contrary to his uſual practice, had ſo great merit in his own eyes, that he did not entertain the leaſt doubt but that it would be complied with; but how much was he ſurprized to hear his dearly-beloved wife recommend another bowl with great earneſtneſs; telling him, at the ſame time, that a glaſs of hot punch would do the gentlemen a great deal of good, and make them ſleep well. Lawſon agreed with her in opinion: and Wills declared, in compliment to her preſcription, he would take part of another bowl; but deſired only half the quantity of the former to be made. "Well, my dear," ſaid the wife to her

huſband, who was broiling with vexation, "do you go and make the punch." This was a motion he had not the leaſt deſign to make. It would have been leaving the lamb with the wolf, the gooſe with the fox. "Go, make it your-"ſelf, ſince you would have it," replied he ſurlily.

"I will, my dear," ſaid the ſmiling dame; and out ſhe tripped.

"You are very happy in a wife, land-"lord," ſaid Wills.

"Yes Sir," returned he, with ſome heſitation.

"Yes indeed," added Lawſon, "a very "pretty good kind of woman."

"So ſo, ſo ſo, maſter; nobody knows "where the ſhoe pinches, but him that "wears it."

"Why, you ſeem to live very happily "together?"

"Yes, happy enough, as a body may "ſay: to be ſure we now and then have a "little—"

HERE was he interrupted by the entrance of his wife with the punch, and Lawſon deprived of a very important diſcovery, as he imagined. But the landlord, as ſoon as he ſaw the bowl ſet on the table, exclaimed in a great fury, "Z—ds, what do "you call this, eighteenpennyworth? Why "it is as much as any three ſhillingsworth "I ever made in my life."

"HUSH, my dear," replied the affectionate hoſteſs, "you certainly miſtake: "beſides, you know, we are drinking along "with theſe gentlemen."

AND here we cannot help taking part with our hoſt in this diſpute: for it is a certain truth, that the good woman had repleniſhed the bowl with a liberal hand, nor was ſhe ſparing in the ingredients; for our travellers beſtowed many praiſes on it, and declared it was the beſt punch they ever taſted; and appealed to the landlord for his opinion. "Aye, aye, ſaid he, rubbing his forehead, "it is very good, "let us make haſte and drink it."

HE followed that advice, and puſhed the glaſs about as faſt as he could; and truly rejoiced was he when he ſaw them go up ſtairs to bed.

THEY had paid their bill, that they might be ready to depart early in the morning; which they informed their landlord they intended to do. Lawſon in vain attempted to get an opportunity to ſpeak to the hoſteſs; and ſhe was as much chagrined on the other ſide, to find Wills took no more notice of her. In this ſituation they parted; and there, being two beds in the room deſigned for our travellers, they ſoon reſigned themſelves into the arms of ſleep: nor do we find that Wills could keep his eyes open long enough to indulge himſelf to the extent of his wiſhes, in meditating on the charms of his Juliet; and however often ſhe might return to his dreams, his waking thoughts were not much employed about her.

WHILE they were enjoying from their labours above ſtairs, a quite contrary ſcene preſented itſelf below. Mine hoſteſs began the charge: "Ah! you're a pretty, "ſneaking fellow to be ſure, when you "were drinking at the gentlemens coſt, to "refuſe to be your ſhare, or to grumble "becauſe I made the bowl a little larger: "I wonder ſome folks are not aſhamed of "their behaviour."

"AYE, I wonder ſo too," replied the landlord; "for if I behaved as ſome folks "do, I ſhould have cauſe to be aſhamed."

"AND pray," ſaid ſhe, "how do they "behave?"

"THAT doeſn't ſignify."

YES, but it does; and you're a ſneak-"ing pitiful fellow I ſay again, to be-"grudge a drop——"

"NOT ſuch a fellow as yours there, "You'd like ſuch fellows, I fancy."

"WHAT's the foolatum at now? What "crotchet have you got in your noddle, "eh? So a body muſtn't ſpeak civility to a "gentleman. Go to bed, do, you great oaf."

"NO, that I ſha'n't, till I pleaſe,"

"WELL, do as you like."

SHE buſied herſelf about ſome trifles for near an hour, and at laſt her huſband followed her up to bed. And though we ſhould be the firſt to condemn unreaſonable jealouſy in any body, yet we cannot help ſaying, there was ſome reaſon for our hoſt's taking ſuch care of his wife. Indeed he hardly believed himſelf ſure of her

when he had her with him in bed. Poſſeſſed with theſe notions, and firmly convinced that ſhe would go to the young ſtrangers, his gueſts, the moment ſhe found an opportunity, he determined to lie awake to watch her. He was not able to execute this ſcheme; for he fell aſleep ſoon, overpowered by the liquor he had drank, and the toils of the day. But ſleep did not afford him repoſe from his heated and jealous ideas. His active fancy preſented the ſcene of his diſhonour to him in a dream. He thought he ſaw his wife ſteal out of the room, and go to that where the objects of his fears lay. He roſe in his ſleep, and, opening the door of his chamber, made towards theirs. By the way he awoke, and ſo ſtrongly was the dream impreſſed on his mind, that he ſtill imagined himſelf purſuing his adulterous wife. He got into the room where our heroes, innocent of ſuch criminal deſigns, were faſt aſleep. Doubtful, at firſt, which was the right bed, he approached the next to him, and groping about with his hands touched Wills's ſmooth face, and feeling his hair looſe, was ſure he had found his wife. "Ah! you vile ſtrumpet,"

exclaimed he, have I got you at laſt;" and giving Wills's hair a pull, he awoke. "Yes you jade, you outſwore me about "the Captain, but now I have caught you;" and giving another pull, Wills, who did not like ſuch treatment, gave him ſuch a blow in the pit of the ſtomach, that ſent him ſome paces backwards; and in his retreat encountring a chair, he tumbled over it, roaring out murder as loud as he could bawl. Wills called out thieves and demanded aſſiſtance. Lawſon, though faſt aſleep, was rouſed by this unuſual outcry; and demanding the cauſe of it, Wills informed him, that a thief, he imagined, had caught hold of his hair, and was dragging him out of bed, as he believed, when he awoke, and knocked him down. "There may be more in the room," added he, "ſo take care." Lawſon ſtarted out of bed, and the firſt ſtep he made was on the proſtrate carcaſe of the unfortunate landlord. "Here's one of them," ſaid Lawſon.

"SECURE him," ſaid Wills, "'till we "get lights, and aſſiſtance."

LAWSON, to keep him faſt, knelt upon the fallen foe to prevent his riſing; who,

feeling ſuch an unuſual weight, roared out more violently than ever. This outcry did not fail to anſwer the purpoſe for which it was deſigned, and the men and women ſervants belonging to the inn ruſhed promiſcouſly into the room, and without ſtaying to cloath themſelves. But the evil was not remedied, for yet no light appeared. At laſt, the gleam of a candle ſhone forth, and ſoon after my landlady approached this ſcene of confuſion. She demanded what was the matter; when Wills told her he had been aſſaulted by ſome robber, as he apprehended, while aſleep, and whom Lawſon had ſecured: ſo, taking the candle from her, went to ſee whom they had got, when, to their utter aſtoniſhment, they beheld the face of their landlord. The ſervants ſkulked off to bed when they ſaw nobody elſe, and left them to ſettle the matter by themſelves. For a time they were ſilent from ſurprize, till Wills demanded of him what was the reaſon of ſuch treatment.

"Ah! Sir, ſaid he, "that traitreſs is "the reaſon of it; ſhe'll be the death of "me at laſt. I was ſure ſhe came here,

"and I followed her, and am ſufficiently "puniſhed for it, for I have broke ſome "of my ribs."

"It is no matter if your neck was broke, "you jealous-pated fool. And was this a "cauſe for diſturbing theſe gentlemen? I "ſhall be ruined and beggared by you; "nobody will come near the houſe. Oh "my dear Sir," ſaid ſhe, addreſſing herſelf to Wills, "impute not this to me. "Indeed, Sir, I am as innocent as the "child unborn. But this is the way he "always uſes me. Why don't you down "of your knees, and aſk the gentleman's "pardon?

"No, no," ſaid Wills, "I am ſorry "for the miſtake that has happened, and "beg we may not be diſturbed again."

That ſhe very devoutly aſſured him he ſhould not; ſo ſending her huſband out before her, ſhe wiſhed them a good night, and left them to their repoſe: where we ſhall leave them alſo for a while, and ſhall not recount the abuſe ſhe beſtowed on her unfortunate huſband, which ſhe ſtiled a curtain-lecture.

CHAPTER XXV.

The journey continued. An ale-house scene, and a person whom they met there, introduced.

IN the morning early they arose, and going down stairs found the courteous landlady risen, and ready to receive them: which she did, with many apologies for the treatment they had met with; entreating them to excuse it, and begging, if they came that way again, not to let what had happened prevent their favouring her with their good company: and as they had risen so soon, insisted upon their taking some rum and milk which she had prepared, and was then ready for them. Wills at first refused, but, taking example by Lawson, who drank heartily of the cordial beverage, and being over-persuaded by the good woman, who enumerated the evils that frequently were occasioned by going into the cold with an empty stomach, he partook of it. Every attempt to pay her for it, she resisted very strenuosly; and hoping to see them soon again, she curtsied lowly at the door as they took their leave of her.

When they had gone ſome diſtance from the houſe, Wills obſerved, that he had been in many places with his friend Brewer, without meeting ſuch an example of ſpontaneous civility. "And indeed," ſaid he, "ſhe ſeems to be a very good-natured wo-"man; and the thankfulneſs ſhe expreſſes "towards her gueſts, who ſpent ſo mere a "trifle with her as we did, muſt make "her very noted, and procure her much "cuſtom."

"And pray Wills, ſaid Lawſon, "do "you think it merely on the ſcore of our "cuſtom that ſhe was ſo extremely civil?"

"I do, indeed."

"But I know to the contrary; and if "ſhe had been as civil to me as ſhe would "fain have been to you, the huſband "ſhould have had ſomething more than "ſuſpicions to have been troubleſome for, "Ah, Frank, I cannot believe all that ſim-"plicity and careleſſneſs unaffected. 'Tis "true you might juſt now have been en-"gaged with the thoughts of Miſs Har-"court; but your deepeſt rivers are al-"ways ſilent, and the ſtill ſow ſucks all "the draught. You modeſt fellows do

"more miſchief, than a whole regiment "of ſuch rattling blockheads as I am. Now "don't you think our landlady very hand-"ſome?"

"I believe ſhe was: and indeed, as you "ſuppoſed, I was too intent on contriv-"ing how I ſhall come at Juliet, to take "particular notice of her. But if my ideas "had been totally diſengaged from any "other perſon, I never ſhould have con-"ſidered her as an object of deſire; and "inſtead of encouraging, I ſhould have "repreſſed every ſentiment that tended "that way."

"So, if ſhe had been extremely kind "to you, and wiſhed you to be ſo to her, "nay, told you ſo, you would have re-"jected her?"

"Most undoubtedly. Becauſe ſhe would "have had me been guilty of a crime, is "that a reaſon I am to commit it? What "thorns ſhould I have planted in that "man's breaſt: and a poor excuſe it would "have been for me, to have ſaid to the "huſband, I have made you miſerable it "is true; but your wife tempted me. "How ſhould I, in a ſimilar ſituation,

"admit the force of ſuch an excuſe my-
"ſelf? You may laugh, Lawſon, but I
"would not do ſuch a thing."

"WELL, Wills, I ſhould like to truſt
"my wife with you, if I were ſure of your
"always retaining ſuch ſentiments; but
"all fleſh is frail. In truth, whenever I
"marry, which I don't believe will be
"ſoon, I ſhall take proper care of my
"wife."

"AND make yourſelf as ridiculous as
"our jealous landlord did. Guilt is al-
"ways ſuſpicious: and a man who has in-
"jured others, is always afraid of being
"injured himſelf. You'll have occaſion to
"change your ſentiments one day or an-
"other."

"AYE, and ſo will you perhaps; how-
"ever, I hope not."

IN friendly intercourſe of ſentiment did they paſs the day. The converſation of a companion ſhortens a long road: but it is delightful to have that companion friend, to whom you can unburthen your heart. As they had found themſelves better able to puſh forward this day than the former;

they paſſed through the town where they intended at firſt to have lain, and walked on, as it was too early to put up for the night. They had already entered upon a large common, and beguiled time with chatting on their ſituation, and the ſcheme they were to purſue, when they found night ſtealing on them very faſt, and themſelves in the middle of a wild heath, where they could perceive no houſe. They began to look about them, as it was rather diſagreeable to be benighted; but not being weary, they determined to walk on till they reached ſome place of entertainment. They accordingly trudged on for near five miles further, before they ſaw any thing like a human habitation. At laſt Wills perceived a light at a diſtance, which he imagined to be a ſign of ſome houſe, and they accordingly made towards it. They were not deceived. It was a little alehouſe on the edge of this common, near a ſmall church. As they approached it, they heard the ſound of different voices; and, willing to know what was the ſubject of their diſcourſe, liſtened a little to hear it. A female voice demanded, "Now won't you, John, won't "you marry me then?" To which a voice,

harſh and loud, replied, Aye damme, "muſt he, or go to jail, ſo let'un take his "choice."

"If matrimony is the only harm we have "to fear in this houſe," ſaid Wills, "we "may venture in." So, rapping at the door, and having declared themſelves friends and benighted ſtrangers, they were admitted. But the ſcene that was preſented to their ſight beggars all deſcription.

Next the door, in a large elbow chair, was placed a farmer, who though the chair was very capacious, could ſcarcely be contained in it, to ſuch a ſize had he grown: a happy reſemblence of the barrel he ſo often drank from. Round his waiſt went a large rope, which was faſtened to the body and arms of a good likely young fellow, who was ſeated beyond him next the wall, and from thence it was conveyed to the back and one of the elbows of hir chair: that they were bound very ſecurely together. Behind his chair ſtood a girl, wipeing her eyes, in the poſture of Grief. In the corner of the chimney ſat an elderly man with a

mug in his hand, which he ſeemed to pay great attention to.

The entrance of our travellers cauſed a general ſilence: and they having demanded, in the moſt courteous terms, if they could have a draught of beer, the old woman, who was landlady, anſwered in the affirmative; and chairs were procured for them. They fat farmer himſelf lamented that it was not in his power to accommodate them with his great chair; "But, really," ſaid he, "I cannot untie "myſelf. This civility induced them to aſk the reaſon of this extraordinary appearance; and he directly informed them, that he was overſeer of the poor in that pariſh; and that the girl behind him, whom they ſaw crying, was of the ſame pariſh; and that the young fellow, who was a ſmith in one of the neighbouring pariſhes, had got her with child; and ſhe having ſworn that he was the father of it, he had apprehended him, either to make him give ſecurity for the maintenance of the child, or elſe to marry the girl, and take her home to his own pariſh, and ſo rid them of the burden: "And ſo," ſaid he, "I had a great deal of trouble in look-

"ing after this young man; and having "caught him at laſt, as I am very lame "of one leg, I am afraid he will run away "from me again, and then I ſhall loſe "him entirely; ſo, you ſee, I have con- "trived to faſten him here to me: and if "he runs away with me and my chair, I "will forgive him."

"REALLY," ſaid Lawſon, "that is total- "ly impoſſible, if Samſon or Topham does "not come among us to aſſiſt him; but, "pray, what do you intend to do with "him?"

"WHY, I ſhall ſtay up here all night "with him; and in the morning the par- "ſon will come here, and they ſhall be "married; for the church is but a ſtone's "throw off."

"IF he has deluded her with a pro- "miſe of marriage," ſaid Wills, "I think "it is only juſtice that he ſhould be com- "pelled to make her that reparation."

"YES, indeed, Sir, he did," replied "the girl ſobbing: you know you did, "when you robbed me of my vartue, "John: now ſpeak the truth."

"Ay, indeed, ſo it is; Sir, the only "reperation, as you ſay," added the overſeer; "and if a don't, a goes to jail as "ſure as the devil's in London."

"They ſhould ſend me to jail then, or "to the devil," replied the ſtranger in the corner, "before I would conſent to marry "her, for the ſake of any pariſh, or any "overſeer."

"Zaunds," quoth the overſeer, in a great fury, and exalting his voice, naturally loud; "I wiſh I was a juſtice of the "peace, or a churchwarden at leaſt, that "I might put thee in the ſtocks for thy "impudence. How canſt thee have the "face to advice this honeſt man here not "to marry the wench? Thee deſerv'ſt to "be lick'd within an inch of thy life, a "dog, thee doſt."

"Don't be ſaucy, friend," replied the ſtranger; "I ſhall fall foul of you if you "are; I ſhall give you a drubbing."

"If thee doſt," ſaid the girl, "I'll ſcratch "thee eyes out. What haſt thee to ſay "to it, thou great chuckleheaded dolt?"

"Let un, let un touch me, if he da-

"res: I'll ha him by the heels to-morrow "morning for't: a wants to let this man "eſcape."

"You're more afraid than hurt," added the ſtranger; "ſha'n't touch you, ſo ſit "quiet."

And now this diſpute was obliged to be poſtponed; for our landlady was making way for herſelf to dreſs ſome bacon and eggs for our adventurers ſupper; and by that means the diſputants were obliged to be ſilent. In the mean time, Lawſon handed them his beer; and they drank very ſociably all together, except the ſtranger in the corner, who drank from his own mug, and always remembered the healths of Lawſon and Wills.

In a little time their ſupper was dreſſed; and, having in vain invited the company to partake of it, they fell to with wonderous appetite, and made great diſpatch in the devouring it. But what to do for a bed, they knew not. This they were ſoon ſupplied with, by the old woman's offering to ſit up with her neighbours, and yield her bed to them; which ſhe furniſhed with clean ſheets for the pur-

poſe. And now our travellers were refreſhed, their ſpirits were lighter, and they all made a ſocial circle round the fire, in the kitchen, or parlour, or by whatever title you chooſe to diſtinguiſh it; being the only room in the houſe fit to receive company. The poor weeping girl ſat next her intended ſpouſe on one ſide; and the overſeer, to whom and his chair he was inſeparably faſtened for that night, on the other. The landlady ſat by Molly's ſide; the ſtranger kept his corner; and Wills and Lawſon filled up the vacant ſpace. As the ale went round, the ſpirits of the company became exhilarated, and they ſeemed all well diſpoſed to be ſocial, except the young ſmith, who ſtill kept a ſullen ſilence; and the girl, who, taking his hand in hers, looked up to his face with tearful eyes; "Now, do, John; won't you marry me; "now do, dear; good John, ſay you wull."

"I ſuppoſe," ſaid the overſeer, "he has "taken the ſulks, becauſe of what that "buſy-body meddling fellow there has been "ſaying. 'Od rot 'un! but I'll ha' un be"fore his betters to-morrow, that ſhall "make 'un ſpeak with the devil to'un, I "warrant."

"Why, truly," replied the ſtranger in the corner, "if my perſuaſions would avail, "or would he follow my advice, there "ſhould be no force or puniſhment pow-"erful enough to compel me to marry "her ſuppoſe he runs away the moment "he marries her?"

"Why then," replied the pariſh officer, "ſhe'll be made an honeſt woman of, and "our pariſh will be rid of the burden. And "when once the ceremony is over, he may "go to old Nick, an he will."

"I thought ſo, ſaid the ſtranger; "and "this you call executing the law. So is "hanging: and a man had better be hang-"ed, than marrry a woman he don't like, "or, indeed, marry at all."

"Pray, Sir," ſaid Wills, "whence "ariſes this averſion to matrimony?"

"From my own feelings."

"Oh, I beg pardon, Sir," ſaid Wills; "I did not aſk the queſtion with a view of "penetrating into your private affairs. But "may not you miſtake the matter, and "ſhew only the worſt ſide of the picture? "I ſuppoſe young man," continued he,

turning to the ſmith, "that when you firſt "addreſſed this girl, you had ſome incli- "nation, ſome fondneſs for her. It is alſo "to be ſuppoſed, that you made uſe of "every art in your power to render your- "ſelf agreeable to her, and to make her "love you. It is not to be imagined that "you courted her with a deſign only of "debauching her, of robbing her of her "innocence; at leaſt, whatever your inten- "tion might be, you did not confeſs it "openly; for then, ſurely, ſhe would have "ſhunned you, and never ſuffered you to "purſue your villanous ſchemes. It is not "natural to imagine, that ſhe ſo far over- "came the modeſty of her ſex, as to turn "ſuitor to you. It muſt then have been "under falſes pretences, under a deluſive "and feigned character, you ruined her. "You pretended to be true and honeſt, and, "to ſeek her in the Lawful and honourable "ſtate of matrimony, when really you had "no ſuch intention in your heart: there- "fore, you have been guilty of the great- "eſt injuſtice, and in my opinion, of ab- "ſolute robbery. Suppoſe a man whom "you know to be your neighbour, and of "whom you had reaſon to entertain a good

"opinion for his honeſty and the upright-
"neſs of his dealings, was to come to you,
"and aſk you to lend him money, or tools,
"or a ſheep, promiſing, at the very ſame
"time, to reſtore it punctually to you, or
"make you reparation and amends for it
"in ſuch manner as you ſhould ſuffer no
"loſs: yet ſhould he, as ſoon as ever he
"obtained what he wanted from you, run
"away and leave you to ſeek your remedy
"as you could, would you not call him a
"rogue and a robber? yet there might be
"ſome amends made you; and, though
"you were hurt by the loſs, would not
"be ruined. In how much worſe light is
"your treatment of this poor girl to be
"reſpected? You have robbed her, and
"ſhame is her portion. The unpitying
"world, which always condemns the un-
"fortunate, will reproach her; whilſt your
"conſcience will eternally ſting you. It
"does not appear to me, that you deny
"that you promiſed her marriage, or that
"you accuſe her of any crime: therefore,
"if you have any honeſty remaining, you
"will, by making her your wife, wipe off
"the ſtain you have thrown upon her.
"This compulſion you ſuffer now, is but

"the conſequence of human laws enforcing "juſtice: there will be another place, mo-"re awful and terrible, where you muſt, "ſome time or another, anſwer for your "breach of promiſes, and your conduct, "to that wretched girl, and her more "miſerable offſpring,"

He ceaſed, and a univerſal ſilence prevailed. Lawſon though he did not entirely agree with his friend, yet, out of reſpect to him, reſtrained himſelf from giving his opinion. The two women looked on him as an angel: and the overſeer who little expected to hear ſuch ſentiments from a young man who was not a parſon, was aſtoniſhed. The ſtranger groaned, and the poor girl ſobbed and wept plentifully, during the addreſs. The young ſmith was not unaffected; he held his head down, buried in thought: "Well, John," ſaid Molly, "d'ye hear what the young gen-"tleman ſays? Now you know it is all "truth; do you now,—do marry my."

"Well, Molly," ſaid he, "if it will "make you any ſatisfaction, I wull."

"You wull! replied the aſtoniſhed overſeer; "that's a good lad."

"YES," ſays he, "I wull, but thee "coudnſt ha' made me do it: that young gentleman has ſhew'd me I am a rogue, and I was always counted an honeſt lad before."

HE could not contain himſelf any longer, and he blubbered aloud. The girl ran to Wills, and, falling on her knees, thanked him in the moſt grateful terms ſhe could expreſs herſelf. He raiſed her up, and bade her go to her huſband, which ſhe obeyed; and embracing one another, their tumults ſoon ſubſided, and peace returned.

"WELL" ſaid the overſeer, "I do not "believe our parſon would have made 'un "do this in a week, now: but ſince it is "ſo, I will give thee a guinea, John, and "half a crown to buy thee a dinner."

"AND I," ſaid Wills: "will add an- "other to it. And now, my good lad, "follow your trade, and I have no doubt "but you will have a good wife in her: "and when you are convinced how happy "you will be in doing your duty, am ſure "you will make her a good huſband too."

So ſaying, he depoſited the guinea in the overſeer's hands, who at his requeſt,

releaſed him from his confinement. The young fellow returned him thanks for his kindneſs, which he promiſed not to forget; "and never," ſaid he, "till this mo-"ment, did I imagine there was any harm "in kiſſing a girl."

"No, nor I either," ſaid the overſeer, "when the pariſh is freed; I have kiſſed "many one in my time myſelf: but as for "other mens wives, I never took much "delight in 'em."

"Wills could not help ſmiling at the farmer's moderation; and calling for more ale, circulated the mug, happy in reſtoring peace and harmony.

"Well, Sir," ſaid the ſtranger in the corner, "you certainly have a great deal "of merit for doing this, becauſe you "think it is for the good and happineſs of "them both that it ſhould be done: but "If you knew as much of the world as I "do, you would find it otherwiſe. What-"ever my ſentiments may be, I ſhall not "diſcloſe them here, leſt I ſhould deſtroy "the work you have ſo much to your own "ſatisfaction concluded."

"You muſt have ſome very ſtrong rea-
"ſons for arguing thus, Sir," ſaid Lawſon, whoſe curioſity was excited by this converſation.

"I have indeed."

"You ſeem to be a traveller too," ſaid Wills.

"I am, Sir."

"And which way do you go?"

"I ſhall go beyond Coventry."

"We are going that way too, and ſhall
"be glad to bear you company."

He was pleaſed at the offer, and they ſettled the time of their departure in the morning.

They went to bed, and our two friends were obliged to ſleep together. In the morning when they aroſe, they found the parties all faſt aſleep round the expiring fire; when having waked them, and wiſhed all happineſs to the couple that were to be married, they departed, attended by the bleſſings and good-wiſhes of the whole company they left behind them.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The journey continued. The ſtranger's hiſtory begun.

AS they purſued their way, their converſation naturally turned upon the adventures of the preceding night; and Lawſon, in hopes of urging the ſtranger to aſſign his reaſons for oppoſing matrimony ſo earneſtly, and at the ſame time declaring in part his own private opinion, aſked Wills, how he could be inſtrumental in making that poor fellow unhappy by forcing him to marry that wench? "As "for my part," ſaid he, "I could never "imagine that a woman who had once "granted me a favour, could refuſe it to "any body elſe." The ſtranger joined him; and they were ſtrongly oppoſed by Wills. This diſpute laſted till they came to the place where they thought it neceſſary, and by the demands of their ſtomachs for food, abſolutely incumbent on them to breakfaſt. Having diſpatched that important affair, they proceeded for ſome time without ſpeaking a word. At length the ſtranger broke ſilence, and addreſſed Wills thus: "You ſeem to me, Sir, to act from

"principle; you do not deviate this morn-
"ing from your ſentiments of laſt night;
"therefore I ſuppoſe you muſt be aſtoniſhed
"at hearing my opinion concerning mar-
"riage, and ſo ſtrongly oppoſing the match
"concluded by you then. You are a very
"young man, and from what I have ſeen,
"have but little experience; therefore I
"will endeavour to inſtruct you by the
"misfortunes which I brought on myſelf,
"chiefly. It is an hiſtory I have never yet
"told to any body, nor ſhould I relate it
"now, but that I am going to quit the
"world, and ſhall bury myſelf in obſcu-
"rity. It is very irkſome to me to tell it:
"the recollection of my guilty miſconduct
"will crimſon my cheeks with blood, drawn
"from my heart. I ſhall relate the facts
"as they happened in order of time, tho'
"they did not come to my knowledge for
"ſome years after."

"My name is Perkins, and I am a na-
"tive of Warwickſhire. To the place
"of my birth am I now retiring. My
"father, who had a good many children,
"was a ſubſtantial farmer, and gave us
"the beſt education he could afford. I
"was taught to read; and taking much

"delight in the mathematics, during the "time I was kept at ſchool, improved my- "ſelf very much, and made a great pro- "ficiency in them. When I was about "fifteen, my father ſent me up to Lon- "don, where I was bound apprentice to "a genteel trade. Being of an amorous "complexion, and meeting with very few "difficulties in indulging my favourite pur- "ſuits, I became an adept in the myſte- "ries of the fair ſex. The little allowance "that was remitted me from the country "kept me in cloaths to appear genteely "for one in my ſtation, and to my own "addreſs I truſted for every thing elſe: "nor was I ever without money, for I "was the favourite of many during the "time of my apprenticeſhip: and expe- "riencing ſuch ſweets from ſo early a com- "merce with the ſex; I reſerved myſelf "for them, and never deſcended to that "claſs which ſo often occaſions the deſtruc- "tion of many unhappy wretches. My "ſervitude expired, and a woman with a "ſum of money, larger than I had any "reaſon to expect, for I got nothing from "my father, took a fancy to me, and I, "to ſecure her fortune, married her. We

"lived together for ſome years very hap-
"pily, and I had ſeveral children by her,
"who all died in their infancy. She was
"much older than me, yet ſhe always be-
"haved herſelf like a good wife as far as
"ever I knew."

"In the ſtreet where I had my ſhop,
"and within two doors of me, lived one
"Garton, who was of the ſame trade; and
"though we both had a great deal of bu-
"ſineſs, yet we always looked on each
"other with a jealous eye, and were con-
"ſidered as rivals in trade by the neigh-
"bourhood. Garton had two daughters:
"the eldeſt was at home with him, the
"younger was abroad for the benefit of
"her education. With him alſo lived a
"niece, who acted as upper ſervant in the
"family. Though Garton and I were not
"as intimate and ſociable as neighbours
"generally are, yet the women uſed to
"viſit backwards and forwards with my
"wife, and preſerved a correſpondence;
"and as I uſed to ſcrape a little on the
"fiddle, and was merry and ſprightly, the
"daughter and niece uſed to come frequent-
"ly into my ſhop, and we became very
"familiar. Well acquainted with the ſex,

"I ſoon perceived that they were both "comeatable; and I determined to have "them. Opportunity firſt ſerved with the "niece, who happened to come in when "my wife was abroad: I ſoon prevailed "with her; and ſhe proved with child in "a little time. Miſs Garton, whoſe name "was Betty, a deſirable little girl, and, "as I well knew, not very difficult of "acceſs, was the next I fixed my eye on: "and I was encouraged to hope for ſuc-"ceſs, from ſome anecdotes I knew of her. "A neighbour, who obſerved an officer "who lodged in Garton's houſe taking ſo-"me liberties with his daughter that were "not conſiſtent with ſtrict modeſty, in-"formed the father of it: who inſtantly "diſmiſſed his lodger. A young hoſier "ſucceeded in her affection: and I uſed "my endeavours to obtain a place in them "alſo. I was not unſucceſsful; but the "niece, watchful of all my motions, per-"ceived my intentions, and acquainted her "couſin with her ſituation, and bade her "be cautious of me. This availed very "little; and I believe only did me ſervice "with Betty, who ſoon after ſurrendered "to me. For a couple of months this in-

"tercourſe was carried on without the "leaſt apprehenſions of a diſcovery, and I "uſed to lie in Garton's houſe with his "daughter almoſt every night. At length "a watchman, who ſtood oppoſite his door, "perceiving me go into his houſe ſo fre-"quently, imagined it could be with no "good deſign; and one night, as old Gar-"ton was coming home, informed him of "the whole affair; and told him, that I was "then in the houſe. Inflamed with rage, "he faſtened the door, leſt I ſhould make "my eſcape; and ruſhing into the room "where I was encircled in his daughter's "arms, woke me from my ſlumbers; and "I perceived the enraged father ſtanding at "the bedſide with a piſtol in his hand. I "ſtarted up; and he preſenting the piſtol, "told me I was a dead man, if I attempt-"ed any violence, or reſiſtance. He ad-"ded, that he had been informed of the "criminal intercourſe I carried on with his "daughter and was determined to have ſa-"tisfaction of me; And as you are a mar-"ried man, ſaid he, I will wipe out the "diſgrace of my family in your blood. "My fears, for I knew him to be a man "of a reſolute and inflexible temper, in-

"ſpired me with a ſcheme to prevent his "wreaking his vengeance on me. I will "do her every juſtice in my power, ſaid "I, and will marry her directly."

"WHAT! are you not married already?"

"I affirmed I was not; and that the "woman I had ſo long lived with was "not my wife, though ſhe paſſed for ſuch. "Without ſcrutinizing too ſtrictly into the "matter, glad to get his daughter off his "hands, he took me at my word, and in- "ſiſting on the performance of my pro- "miſe in the morning, he left us together, "after locking the chamber door, leſt I "ſhould give him the ſlip. In the morn- "ing he came to me: every thing proper "was prepared, and his daughter became "Mrs. Perkins. As I was tolerably well "in the world, I had a houſe at ſome "diſtance from my former habitation, and "there I took my new bride. I had now "two wives, and difficult was the taſk to "reconcile myſelf to the firſt. However, "I knew her moderation, and was ſure "ſhe loved me ſo well that ſhe could "never be perſuaded to hurt me. When "the firſt tranſports of her rage and ſur-

"prize had ſubſided, I went to her; and "after bearing patiently her firſt accuſa- "tions, we at laſt ſettled matters, and "lived upon the beſt footing poſſible, con- "ſidering the ſituation of affairs. Soon "after we were married, my new wife "proved with child; and as I had ſet up "the public buſineſs, her ſiſter Diana, who "was returned to her father's, came to "aſſiſt her during her pregnancy. I had "given up to my former wife all my ſtock "in trade, which ſhe knew how to ma- "nage very well; and conſtantly went to "ſee her, which ſhe ſeemed tolerably well "pleaſed with, and matters went on very "peaceably and quietly for a time."

Here, having approached the place where they propoſed to dine, Perkins poſtponed the ſequel of his hiſtory. And whilſt our travellers are taking ſome reſt, we ſhall afford ſome to our readers, by concluding this chapter.

CHAPTER XXVII.

In which PERKINS *concludes his hiſtory, and our travellers their journey.*

WHEN dinner was ended, they again purſued their journey, and Perkins reſumed his hiſtory.

"MY wife's ſiſter Diana was about nine-
"teen, handſome, lively, and of a warm
"conſtitution. She was frequently at our
"houſe, and I could not help loving her.
"This I imagine ſhe perceived, nor was
"ſhe offended at it: No unpromiſing ſymp-
"tom for me. In the mean time, my wife
"was brought to bed of a fine boy, which
"I firmly believe was my own. We had
"lived upon a very good footing ever ſin-
"ce we had been married: and though I
"had two wives, there was no complaint.
"But about this time my firſt wife died,
"and I was free from any proſecution for
"bigamy. Soon after my ſecond wife had
"got about again, I found her ſiſter Diana
"as compliant to my deſires as I could
"have wiſhed her. We enjoyed true plea-
"ſure for a while in each others arms:
"and then firſt I knew from her, that my

"wife's uncle had been fond of her long "before I married her, and it was ſup- "poſed had received every mark of fond- "neſs from her that a man could obtain "from a woman. This ſhocked me much. "I had obſerved him coming about the "houſe when ſhe was very big with child: "and now ſhe was about again, he renew- "ed his viſits, which were very frequent. "I determined to watch them, and found "that I had not been deceived in the re- "preſentation which had been made to me. "My wife proved again with child; and, "what was more diſtreſſing, Diana com- "municated her ſituation to me at the "ſame time; and entreated me, in the moſt "earneſt manner, to ſave her from the "ſhame that would attend the public knowl- "edge of her having a criminal intercourſe "with her ſiſter's husband. I made a ſpee- "dy determination. There was but one "road open for me; and that was to fly. "I collected all the money I could, near "two hundred pounds, and with my ever- "beloved little girl, I ſet off. As I was "ſure her father's vengeance, and my wi- "fe's rage, would purſue me through this "kingdom, I went to another, and chang-

"ed my name. One friend only I truſt-
"ed with the ſecret of my reſidence; and
"he, from time to time, informed me of
"their proceedings. There were rewards
"offered in the public papers for bringing
"back Diana, and giving information of
"me: but I eluded their ſearch, for I was
"in a place where Engliſh newspapers ne-
"ver came. I alſo found, though I had
"left my wife well ſtocked with every
"thing, that ſhe ſold all, and retired to
"her father's where ſhe endeavoured to
"run me in debt as much as ever ſhe
"could: but being aware of this, I return-
"ed to England, and took the benefit of
"an act of grace as a fugitive, without
"their knowledge: and then Diana and I
"determined to remain in England, which
"we did; aud ſetting up the public buſi-
"neſs for her, which ſhe managed with
"great cleverneſs, I betook myſelf to
"my own trade, and we did very well
"together."

"Not long after this, old Garton died,
"and left all his property among his child-
"ren: but the fear of a diſcovery pre-
"vented our claiming Diana's proportion.
"My friend alſo died about this time, and

"I remained in ignorance of every tranſ-
"action relating to them. For many years
"Diana lived with me; and I believe, in
"all that time, ſhe never was guilty of
"the leaſt breach of her fidelity. And of
"ſeven children we had, not one ſurvived.
"We eluded every enquiry that was made
"after us, and lived only for each other.
"That happineſs at laſt ended, for my
"dear Diana died. When curioſity im-
"pelled me to ſearch after my wife, and
"finding ſome people that knew the fami-
"ly, learned, that her uncle, who alſo
"died ſoon after her father, had bequeath-
"ed a very conſiderable ſum to her and
"the child ſhe had ſoon after my flight
"with her ſiſter, and which both he and
"I had every reaſon in the world to be-
"lieve was his own; that ſoon after this
"money had fallen to her, ſhe took a lik-
"ing to one Mr. O'Kelly, an Iriſh chair-
"man, and that ſhe lived with him: that
"they had ſet up a public houſe upon the
"ſtrength of her fortune; but that though
"ſhe was beat and uſed very ill by him,
"ſhe was fond of him. I learned alſo,
"that my eldeſt boy was dead: and hap-
"py I thought myſelf, that my poor child

"was taken away from this wicked world,
"and the tyranny of a mother who ſo
"little regarded him. But though I blam-
"ed her, my heart pitied her ſufferings,
"and I was reſolved to take her home to
"me again, if ſhe was willing to go with
"me: I therefore went to ſome common
"friends both of hers and mine. They
"had long given me up as dead, and
"were as much ſurpriſed to ſee me, as if
"I had actually riſen from the grave.
"When their aſtoniſhment had abated, I
"related every circumſtance of the death
"of Diana, and what had befallen me ſin-
"ce I firſt abſconded. They in their turns,
"informed me of the cruel uſage my wife
"met with from O'Kelly; and that ſhe had
"been with them but two or three days
"before, making her complaint, and la-
"menting the loſs of me, who had ever
"behaved very kindly to her. I confeſſed
"I ſhould be glad to ſee her, and that
"every thing that had paſſed ſhould be
"buried in oblivion, as well on my ſide
"as hers. This, they ſaid they were ſure
"would be complied with: and I promiſed
"to call again in a few days to know
"the reſult. When I went again, ſhe was

"there, prepared to meet me. After our "firſt embraces were over, I told her how "glad I was to ſee her. We have both "been guilty, Betty, ſaid I: let that be "forgotten for ever. Let us go together "if you are willing, weep ever our paſt "offences, and merit forgiveneſs for them "by repentance. She replied in the moſt "endearing manner, that it was the wiſh "of her heart, to do ſo: that her paſt "conduct was now moſt odious in her "eyes, and ſhe longed for nothing more "than to forſake thoſe ways. I believed "her. She quitted O'Kelly, and we went "together. But though her apparent re-"pentance might have been ſincere, yet it "came into my head that O'Kelly might "follow her, and, as ſhe loved him, he "might prevail on her to quit me, and "go away with him again. Women though "they complain, are like ſpaniels; and "ſeldom hate a man for uſing them ill, "as they call it. My heart foreboded that "ſhe was not entirely weaned from him, "and leſt he ſhould come after her, I did "not take her directly to my own houſe, "which remained an entire ſecret to her, "but brought her to a logding I had hir-

"ed at a very remote part of the town "from her former habitation. Here she "remained with me about four days, and "behaved as well as woman could do. "Some business calling me out one morn-"ing that would detain me all day, I "desired she would not wait dinner for "me. In the evening I returned, intend-"ing, if she had continued only for a "fortnight to behave well and be recon-"ciled to her situation, to have taken her "down to my house in the country: but "when I heard she had gone out in the "morning soon after me, and had not yet "returned, I imagined something more "than ordinary had happened. She knew "that I had received seventy guineas a "few days before, which were in my "desk. I took out the key from my poc-"ket with a design to open the bureau, "to see if it was safe; but she had saved "me that trouble, it was broke open, "and all the money gone. I did not ac-"cuse her; on the contrary, I congratulat-"ed myself that the loss was not greater, "and that the pernicious consequences of "taking her down to my country house "were by this means avoided, which would

"have been my ruin. There was no other "way left, but to let her follow the bent "of her own inclinations, for it was ſoon "known, that ſhe had returned immedia- "tely with my ſpoils to O'Kelly. I the- "refore converted every thing I had in the "world into money, and am now going "to die in the place where I firſt drew "breath. Comfortleſs, ſolitary, and wret- "ched, am I now going to finiſh an unhap- "py life, I know not whether any of "my relations are alive, or if they will "acknowledge me. Without a child, to "be the comfort of my declining years; "without a wife, who would make me "paſs the remnant of my days with more "comfort than I ſhall now find; without "even a friend, ſhall I drag on a wretched "exiſtence, till heaven, pacified by my "repentance and ſufferings, ſhall call me "to a welcome grave. Learn from me, "young men, that a life of guilt termin- "ates in miſery."

He ceaſed. Wills ſhuddered with hor- ror at his ſituation: and even Lawſon was affected. They maintained a long ſilence, each employed in thinking on Perkins's hiſtory. He, unhappy man, ſeemed over-

whelmed with the remembrance of his paſt miſdeeds, which filled him with ſhame and grief. They had little communication together for a great way, till they came to a bye road, which turned off from that which they purſued. "Here, "gentlemen," ſaid Perkins, "I muſt take "my leave of you: this way leads to the "village where my friends did live. I "ſhall reach it to morrow morning. Here "then, I muſt bid you farewell, for ever. "Let my example deter you from the "paths of vice, however alluring or "tempting." They both ſhook hands with him, and, wiſhing him all happineſs, they parted.

"Have mercy on him, gracious heaven," ſaid Wills: "pity his ſufferings, and calm "his diſturbed ſpirit." Lawſon ſeconded him in his prayer, but could not help obſerving to Wills, that the women were the moſt guilty through his whole hiſtory; and that it made good his argument. Wills with his accuſtomed humanity, hoped the beſt; and contended for it, that mankind in general were infinitely better and more virtuous, than our paſſions, partiality, and prejudice would permit us to

allow. This argument lasted them to the end of their journey, which they finished on the second night after they had parted with Perkins: and right glad were they, to find themselves safely arrived at Nantwich, though they were exceedingly tired with their last day's walk. Wills, however forgot his fatigue in the reflection, that he was so much nearer his beloved Juliet: and Lawson was very glad to find himself at the end of his journey.

CHAPTER XVIII.

In which the reader is informed of the steps Wills *took to see* Juliet, *and their success.*

AFTER indulging themselves longer than usual in the morning, they arose: though we must confess, with our usual impartiality, that Wills forced his friend Lawson out of bed, who got up but very unwillingly. While they were at breakfast, they made enquiries about the gentlemen in the neighbourhood; and, among them, Mr. *Harcourt's* name was mentioned. "Lord," says my landlord, "he's a

"main lucky man: there was no leſs "than three lives here t'other day between "him and his brother's fortune and title, "and 'tis but laſt week that the laſt o' "them died and he has it all."

"THAT's lucky indeed! and where "does he live pray, friend?"

"A matter o' ſix miles from hence, as "you turn on your right hand, juſt as "you go out o' the town; it's a main fine "houſe, and a hugeous monſtrous park to "it. And there be a pack o'houſes, a "little village juſt before you come to "the door of the park."

THIS was enough for Wills, who did not chuſe to be too particular in his enquiries, leſt he ſhould give ground for ſuſpicion. As they had dreſſed themſelves remarkably plain, they appeared more like two farmers ſons in their bettermoſt cloaths, than what they really were. Away went Wills, upborne on the wings of love and deſire, to follow the road which he had been directed to. Lawſon panted after, and was obliged to hail him, before he could make him ſtop that he might overtake him. "Really," ſaid Lawſon, "you

"were in ſuch a hurry, that one would "imagine I was your rival, and going to "woo your miſtreſs too, and he that ran "faſteſt was to have her."

"Why truly," replied Wills, "I was "in haſte."

"Then I preſume you are going to "her father, and intend to demand her at "once."

"What put that in your head?" ſaid Wills; "I wiſh to heaven it was in my "power, or that he would give her to me."

"Perhaps," ſaid Lawſon, "this addi-"tion of fortune and title may make him "humble and tractable, and he may be "willing to give his daughter, who can be "no inconſiderable heireſs, to the firſt "handſome young fellow that asks him "for her."

"I ſhould be of a contrary opinion. "Wealth and rank ſeldom encreaſe a man's "humility."

"So I think," ſaid Lawſon: "but I "ſhould imagine you thought otherwiſe, "by your being in ſuch a hurry. Your

"ableſt generals always *reconnoitre* the "ground before they draw out their forces "in battle array; and we ſhould know the "diſpoſition of the enemy, before we be- "gin the attack."

"You ſpeak in parables," ſaid Wills; "explain yourſelf."

"That I will. In my opinion, it "is rather odd for a young fellow with "only fifty pounds a year in his poſſeſ- "ſion, to go and aſk a man to give him "his daughter, who, perhaps, has as many "hundreds; and that, too, without know- "ing whether the girl has any inclina- "tion for him, or of what kind of ſtuff "the father is made. Now my advice "is, that we learn how Miſs Juliet ſtands "affected, if poſſible, before we open "our trenches, and beſiege the town. If "we can bribe, by ſoft looks, fervent "ſighs, or any of theſe current bank bills "of love, ſome of the inhabitants within "to capitulate upon honorable terms, the "day will be our own."

"Thou ſpeakeſt like an oracle, Tom; "but ſtill there is one objection. Will it "not be very diſhonourable to endeavour

"to gain the dear girl's affections, with-
"out her father's conſent?"

"And won't it be very ridiculous to
"aſk his conſent, be denied, and loſe her
"for ever, by that means. But now we
"are all in the dark: let ut learn where
"we are, before we proceed any further."

They began to perceive the village, by this time, that their landlord had deſcribed to them: a little diſtance on the hill was the caſket that contained the jewel, dearer to Wills than all the earth, which was only Mr. Harcourt's houſe, ſurrounded with a beautiful park. On one ſide roſe the humble ſpire of a country church, which oppoſed its whiteneſs to the dark ſhade of a thick wood, whoſe lofty trees towered above it. Wills ſtopped to admire the ſcene, which was rendered delightful to him by its being the dwelling of his Juliet. The proſpect alone pleaſed Lawſon, who could not avoid confeſſing it was fine. The little village lay in a valley, between two gently riſing hills; they accordingly deſcended to it, and every ſtep that Wills advanced, his heart encreaſed its palpitation. At the foot, and on the other ſide

of the bridge, which was thrown over a little ſtream that ran through this valley, was a public houſe, diſtinguiſhed by the ſign of the White Hart; not but that it is ſuppoſed the painter deſigned to have drawn a four footed beaſt; when deſired to paint a White Hart, or whether he knew no better; but certain it is, that the device on the ſign was in ſhape like thoſe harts painted on cards, but with this difference, that is was of a white colour. As this was the only houſe of entertainment in the place, they were obliged to go in; not before Lawſon had predicted that they ſhould be but poorly received there. Wills told him, that truſting to appearances was very fallacious: and they entered the hoſpitable dome. They were received by an old man whoſe hair was white with age; and whom they conjectured, from the blue apron that he wore, was the landlord. They were not miſtaken: and a very pretty ſmart girl that attended in the capacity of ſervant, was, as they afterwards learned, his daughter. They were ſhewn into a little parlour, very clean and neat, which beſpoke the houſwifery of the inhabitants of the houſe.

The old man was very induſtrious in ſupplying his gueſts with what they called for; and they begged he would partake of their liquor. In the courſe of ſome trifling queſtions they aſked the old man, they found him the *narrator temporis acti*, and as communicative as they could wiſh him. They praiſed the neatneſs of his houſe: and Lawſon, who managed the enquiry, aſked if that young woman was his wife. "No, Sir," ſaid the old man, ſmiling, "ſhe is much better, ſhe is my "daughter; I have but her, and one boy "in the world. To be ſure he has been "wild, but he is now ſettled I hope. My "wife, who has been dead about ſeven "years, was a very good woman: and if "ſhe had lived, I believe, I never ſhould "have left Sir Lionel Harcourt's houſe."

"Where does he live?" ſaid Lawſon: for Wills, whoſe faculties were all abſorbed in attention, had not power to aſk a queſtion.

"Lord, Sir, don't you know Sir Lio-"nel's houſe?"

"No, we are but ſtrangers."

"AYE, you muſt be ſtrangers, indeed, "not to know that: 'tis the great houſe "on the hill here."

"I thought that was Mr. Harcourt's."

"AYE, there's the miſtake now. Why, "it was but the week before laſt that his "elder brother died, and he became Sir "Lionel. Though there were two boys, "as ſweet children as ever the ſun ſhone "upon, and they died about a month ago "of the ſmall pox, becauſe the father "wou'dn't oculate them; at leaſt, ſo the "doctor ſaid: and the poor gentleman "grieved ſo after his ſons that he broke "his heart; a good and a worthy gentle-"man he was."

"AND has Sir Lionel any children?"

"YES, he has two daughters: one of "them has been married, about three years, "to a ſquire in the neighbourhood ſhe "don't like much, and a good young lady "ſhe was: but the youngeſt, Miſs Juliet, "ſhe is worſhipped like an angel by every "body about here. So good, ſo affable, "ſo ſweet tempered, and ſo handſome; "lord, ſhe comes here very often to ſee

"my poor girl who was bred up with her, "they were play-fellows ever ſince they "were in the cradle; though my Nancy "is a year older than her, being twenty "laſt Lammas day."

WILLS's perturbations at this account are not eaſily to be deſcribed. He thought ſhe was coming in every moment: and frequently turned his eyes to the door, to ſee if ſhe did not approach, which he dreaded, at the ſame time he wiſhed it. Lawſon, perceiving him very uneaſy, kept up the converſation with the old man; and, by dint of queſtioning him, learned the following account of Sir Lionel Harcourt.

"HE was the younger ſon of a good "family, the elder branch of which were "in poſſeſſion of the title he then enjoy-"ed. That having a very ſmall fortune, "he did not know what to betake him-"ſelf to; and, being of an haughty and "imperious temper, to which was added "a great ſhare of ſurlineſs and ill-nature, "he was hated by the country people, "who in general are fond of the young-"er brothers, as they are the prettier

"gentlemen; but it was the reverſe with
"him. That about five and twenty years
"ago, lady Betty Blinton, with whom
"he had lived as butler and ſteward for
"above fifteen years before, came down
"to that part of the country to take poſ-
"ſeſſion of an eſtate that was left her.
"She was young, a widow, and tolera-
"bly handſome; but a woman of a mild
"and ſweet temper. While ſhe was in
"the country ſhe chanced to ſee Mr. Har-
"court, who really poſſeſſed a great deal
"of perſonal beauty: ſhe was ſtruck with
"him; and he was not long before he per-
"ceived it. As he was inſolent and ſevere
"to thoſe below him, ſo was he fawning
"to thoſe above him. This pretended hu-
"mility fixed Lady Betty's affection, and
"in a ſhort time ſhe married him; and a
"good fortune ſhe was. She had above
"nine hundred pounds a year, and twen-
"ty thouſand pounds in money. How-
"ever, there were five thouſand pounds
"apiece ſettled upon all the girls, inde-
"pendent of the father. The younger
"boys were alſo provided for: but they
"had only theſe two girls in the five years
"ſhe lived with him; for ſhe found too

"late, poor lady, that happineſs did not "conſiſt in beauty; and his temper, natu- "rally bad, was made worſe by not hav- "ing a ſon to inherit his eſtate, and "eſpecially as it was limited to her child- "ren. She broke her heart. It was his "uſage of her made her ill firſt, and en- "creaſed her ſickneſs afterwards. He kept "himſelf unmarried, and turned his whole "thoughts upon encreaſing his fortune, "which, with the late addition to it, is "now very conſiderable; and the ſervants "ſay," continued the old man, "that his "pride and ſeverity are greater ſince this "late title has fallen to him, than before. "About three years ago he forced his eld- "eſt daughter, who was called Betſy, after "her mother, to marry a neighbouring "ſquire, who is like himſelf: and as for "Miſs Juliet, he had like to have loſt her "a little while ago, as ſhe was coming "from London; for it ſeems the floods "were out, and ſhe had like to be drown- "ed, but for a young man who ran into "the water to ſave her. If he was to "be known here, the people would ma- "ke a holiday for him, ſhe is ſo beloved. "I hear that it is rumoured in the family,

"that there is a lord whose wife is lately "dead that has made proposals for her, "and is to visit her very soon."

WILLS changed colour at this information; and his concern was very apparent to Lawson, who still kept up the conversation with the old man, who was very fond of shewing his knowledge. He asked him how long he had left Sir Lionel's family, and for what.

"After my wife's death," said he, "I "found myself less inclinable to put up "with the bad usage I received from him; "and having saved a little money in the "family, I left him, and applied to the "justices for a licence; which they would "have granted me, but Sir Lionel oppos- "ed it; however, at last, as I bore a good "character, they gave me one, and I just "make both ends meet; and what I am "worth, will go between my daughter "and the boy."

THIS was the sum total of what they learned from the old man: and as this took up some time, they dined with him and his daughter, who was very well pleased with her guests; and, in particular,

fixed her eye upon Wills, whom ſhe could not help admiring. His unaffected civility, the reſult of his natural complacency of temper, made her look on him in the moſt amiable light. She joined her father in Juliet's praiſe: it was adding fuel to the fire in Wills's boſom, which there was no occaſion to do. When they had dined, and rewarded their hoſt, (not too liberally, leſt the people ſhould imagine they were not what they appeared to be) they ſtrolled towards the houſe; Wills indulging the muſt romantic notions. They ſaw no appearance of any female, and they ſauntered along the park wall which bordered on the road. Wills had gained conſiderably on his friend, and left him ſome paces behind: but ſomething having ſtruck Lawſon that he wanted to ſhew him, he called out, "Holla, Wills." At that inſtant a genteel young man, decently dreſſed, and mounted on a very good horſe, hearing Lawſon call his friend, ſtopped directly, and, looking very attentively at him, begged him to inform him what o'clock it was, as his watch was out of repair. Wills, immediately pulling out his watch, told him

it was a quarter after three. "Sir, I "thank you," ſaid the ſtranger; and, turning his horſe's head about, exclaimed, loud enough for them to hear him, "It "muſt be him," and rode off as faſt as he could.

Our travellers ſtood looking at each other, in ſilent wonder, for ſome moments. It was evident that Wills was the perſon whom the ſtranger meant: and when he could ſpeak, he declared; he had never ſeen him before. "That is ſo-"mething extraordinary," ſaid Lawſon; "for I am ſure he knows you. Per-"haps it is the footman who was with "the carriage when you firſt ſaw Miſs "Harcourt."

"No, that it is not," ſaid Wills; "I "remember his face very well."

"But it does ſignify," added Lawſon, "who it is; if he knows us, we ſhall be "blown, and Sir Lionel will treat us but "very ſcurvely, when he comes to hear of "our deſign. We had better return, and "conſult what is to be done."

THAT Wills objected to, till he had walked a little further, and made more obſervations, The place was too dear to him, to be induced to quit it eaſily. Lawſon yielded to him; and it being a ſolitary place, and a bye road, they met no other perſon, till they returned to the White Hart again.

CHAPTER XXIX.

In which the plan of operation is ſettled. An interview. A great diſcovery, and the conſequence of it; being full of buſineſs.

THEY juſt called in at the old man's to wiſh him a good night, as they paſſed by, and then purſued the road to Nantwich. Lawſon perceived more difficulties in the proſecution of this ſcheme, than Wills was either aware of, or would ſuffer himſelf to think on. However, the communications of his friend's apprehenſions upon this occaſion, did not ſerve to make Wills eaſy, though it opened his eyes. Lawſon very juſtly concluded, that Sir Lionel would jump at this alliance with quality. It would flatter his pride

and vanity too much to be rejected, and that his daughter's approbation or diſlike would be very little regarded upon the occaſion; therefore he held it moſt prudent, to endeavour to ſecure Juliet's affection, and eſpecially as ſhe had an independent fortune though a ſmall one, and nothing like what ſhe might expect if ſhe married with her father's conſent. Wills, though he did not approve this advice, as it might lead her into an act of diſobedience, if he was ſo happy to pleaſe her, would have acted in another manner if he could: but as he knew Lawſon was more verſed in the ways of the world than himſelf, and had more experience, he ſubmitted to his opinion, and agreed, that they ſhould endeavour to ſee Juliet, and try what effect his prudence would have on her. "At any rate," ſaid Lawſon, "if ſhe likes "you, it will prevent her from yielding "to her father's commands, to marry this "nobleman, which ſhe might otherwiſe be "induced to do, if ſhe had no other object "that her heart was fixed upon." Wills allowed the juſtice of the obſervation, and determined to go to church the next Sunday, where he made no doubt but he

ſhould ſee her. This was the Friday evening, and an whole day muſt neceſſarily elapſe, before he could have a chance of ſeeing her: that day was ſpent too, like the former, in melancholy reflections. He never regretted the loſs of the proſpect of his aunt's fortune, till he found he run a chance of loſing the girl whom he had unalterably fixed his heart upon. He was ſad and dejected; and all Lawſon's endeavours to inſpire him with chearfulneſs, were ineffectual. At length ſunday morning arrived, and he went, with anxious impatience and a fluttering heart, towards Pine-hill, the place of Sir Lionel's reſidence. Lawſon, whoſe intriguing ſpirit was delighted at the thoughts of laying ſchemes, projecting caſtles in the air, running away with a damſel, or ſtorming a chamber window, was amuſing himſelf very agreeably during the walk, by thruſting himſelf and his friend into difficulties, and then extricating themſelves again. Indeed he had traced, in his fertile imagination, a moſt extraordinary ſet of adventures, which he made no doubt would be the conſequence of this amour. He had laid it down as a ſelf-evident truth, that

no girl who had eyes, could refuſe Wills's addreſſes. He well knew the power a handſome young fellow has over a woman, and eſpecially when he had rendered her any ſervice. They were both ſo much taken up with their own thoughts, that they held very little converſation with one another on the road, till they came to the ſpot where they had the firſt view of the church. Here Wills ſtopped. "Now, "Lawſon, I ſhall know my doom: I ſhall "be able to perceive whether Juliet is "pleaſed to ſee me, or not; and then if "this perſon, whoever he is, that ſo un-"fortunately knows me, ſhould diſcover me "here, I ſhall be entirely prohibited from "the ſight of her, by her father's ſeve-"rity."

"WHAT a cowardly fellow thou art, "Wills! Never fear her, ſhe won't eat "you. See her, ſee her, man: I'll engage "we ſhall ſucceed."

LAWSON's being ſo ſanguine gave him ſome encouragement, and they took the path that led to the church. They did

not arrive till the ſervice was near beginning; and not being inclined to ſaunter in the churchyard, they paſſed through the rows of the peaſants and farmers who ſtood on each ſide the door, not without undergoing a ſtrict ſcrutiny. The clerk very civilly put them into a good ſeat, where Wills ſat ſilent, and trembling. The bell ceaſing, the noiſe of the people coming into church, induced Wills to ſtand up; and the firſt object that ſtruck his eyes was his beloved Juliet, more lovely, more charming than ever, followed by her father. Their ſeat was not far diſtant from that in which he was placed. His eyes were faſtened on her: not a motion, not a look eſcaped him. The elegance of her ſhape, and the dignity of her deportment, that he had not ſo good an opportunity of contemplating before, added freſh rivets to his chains. As yet ſhe had not lifted up her eyes from her private devotions, on entering the church; but the moment ſhe did, they were fixed upon him. A bluſh ſpread inſtantaneouſly over her lovely face and boſom; but it was as ſoon ſucceeded by a pallid whiteneſs, that ſhewed her ſurpriſe and her feelings. She was obliged

to ſit down. Wills, at that moment, ſuffered more, if poſſible, than ſhe did; and eſpecially when, looking about, he perceived the young man who had accoſted him on the road two days before, with his eyes ſtedfaſtly fixed on him. He ſat down to avoid his obſervation; and, till he was obliged to ſtand up, by the beginning of the ſervice, he remained in a ſtate truly pitiable. He felt for Juliet ſtrongly, and wiſhed he had not appeared ſo ſuddenly before her. Then this man's knowledge of him! Every thing diſtracted him, and he knew not how to conſtrue her ſurpriſe at ſeeing him. Lawſon, who had already ſettled the matter, conceived a very good conſequence from it; though ſhe never once turned her eyes towards the place where he ſat during the whole remainder of the ſervice. When it was ended, all the congregetion waited for Sir Lionel and his daughter to go out. As they went towards the door, ſhe ſtole a look at Wills, in which he could not perceive the leaſt ſpark of reſentment, or anger. It was not loſt upon Lawſon, who took very good notice of it. Wills remained ſome time in the church, after they

departed: and the ſtranger ſtaid alſo. This gave Wills much uneaſineſs; but how to avoid him, he knew not: he ſauntered in the church-yard, looking at the graveſtones: but ſtill he hovered round him at a diſtance. Wills found it impoſſible to eſcape him: and he and Lawſon took their way down to the public-houſe in the village, where they intended to dine. The old man was glad to ſee his company again, and welcomed them very heartily. There was a piece of boil'd beef in the pot ready, and he hoped they would partake with him. They complied with his invitation. They ſat down, and Lawſon, who was very happy in the proſpect of his friend's affairs coming to a fortunate concluſion, eat very heartily, but Wills had no appetite: the ſight of Juliet was food enough for him for that day; and though preſſed by Nanny, who aſked him frequently if he did not like his dinner, and offered to get him any thing elſe that he did, yet he declined every thing in the moſt obliging manner, and poor Nanny was much vexed at ſeeing him refuſe to eat. They had ſcarce finiſhed their dinner, when the young man came in

whom Wills had endeavoured to ſhun. The moment he ſaw him, urged by ſome extraordinary impulſe, he ſtarted up, and changed colour. His imagination was ſo prepoſſeſſed with the evils that would happen to Juliet in caſe he ſhould be known, and his deſign diſcovered, that he could not help teſtifying this involuntary mark of ſurpriſe, at the ſight of the only man in that part of the world that could betray him. "Sit ſtill, Sir; ſit ſtill," ſaid Johnſon, for ſo was the old man called, "this "is only my ſon Bob, I told you of:" but turning to his ſon to ſpeak to him, he ſaw his face overſpread with a deadly paleneſs, and every mark of horror in his countenance. Nanny, ſcreamed out, and ran to aſſiſt her brother. When he recovered, he ſaid, he was ſuddenly taken ill, but that it was over now; and they reſumed their chairs again. Wills could not help looking very earneſtly at young Johnſon, which ſeemed to encreaſe his confuſion. At laſt, he begged the favour to ſpeak to Wills in private. "By all means," replied Wills; and they walked out together into the garden. "Sir," ſaid Johnſon, "I hope you will excuſe my preſumption,

"I only beg leave to aſk you one que-
"ſtion: Do you know me?"

"No, indeed," anſwered Wills; "I don't
"recollect ever to have ſeen you before.
"But I have the ſame queſtion to aſk you."

"Ah! Sir," ſaid he, "I have the great-
"eſt reaſon to know you, who have been
"my beſt benefactor."

"I never ſaw you, before you ſpoke
"to me the other day: then how can I have
"been of ſervice to you?"

"Sir," replied he, looking about him, and lowering his voice, "do you remem-
"ber your reſcuing a gentleman from the
"hands of ſome robbers; your offering a
"guinea to them, and their refuſing it."

"I do, very well, and was much ſur-
"prized at it."

"Then, Sir, I am that unfortunate man
"who ſpoke to you: and hearing your
"name mentioned the other day, I was
"ſtruck with it: and remembering your
"voice perfectly well, though I could not
"recollect your figure or perſon, it being
"dark, I aſked you that queſtion, to be

"assured of it. And now, Sir, I have "explained to you my knowledge of you, "wishing and hoping it may be in my "power to return you any service for the "great kindness you shewed me."

"The first I require of you," said Wills, "is not to tell my name, or seem to "know me."

'I shall not, Sir."

"I should also be glad to know," said Wills, "how you came into that dread-"ful situation in which I first found you."

"I can refuse to tell you nothing, Sir." replied Johnson; the story is but short. "I had connexions with a girl here, who "had nearly been my ruin: I have not, "however, the sin of seducing her to "answer for. At that time I lived with "Sir Lionel Harcourt's land-steward, to "learn his business, as I was promised the "place upon his death: for my father and "mother were old standers in the family. "Soon after I kept this girl company, I "found that it was taken notice of, and "I had several quarrels with the person "whom I was assistant to, for neglecting

"my buſineſs. My father and mother,
"who knew my attachment to this girl,
"uſed to chide me, and ſet before me the
"bad conſequences of my living with her:
"but I would attend to nothing: ſo, to
"remove myſelf from hearing conſtantly
"what was ſo very diſagreeable to me,
"and ſhe telling me ſhe was with child,
"and I dreading the diſcovery, propoſed
"to her to go to London with me, which
"ſhe moſt readily and willingly conſent-
"ed to. I gathered up all the little mo-
"ney I could lay my hands on, and out
"we ſet, without giving any body the leaſt
"notice. I was a ſtranger in London, but
"ſhe was not: ſhe had acquaintance with
"ſome unfortunate women like herſelf,
"and I was introduced to them and their
"huſbands, as they called them. In riot-
"ing and merriment, the little money I
"had was ſoon expended: and what to do
"to procure more, I knew not. Among
"the men to whom I had been introduced,
"and indeed with whom I conſorted, were
"ſeveral who uſed to make a practice of
"robbing on the highway: by this means
"they had always money. It was pro-
"poſed to me to recruit myſelf in like

"manner: but I declined it with horror.
"To live in poverty with me, did not
"ſuit my girl: ſhe reproached me with
"want of ſpirit, and upbraided me for
"the evils I brought on her. I could not
"bear this: and determined to brave every
"thing, to procure what ſhe wanted.
"The firſt night we ſet out, we had but
"bad fortune. The way to deſtruction is
"broad and eaſy, and vice ſoon becomes
"habitual. The ſecond night I had not
"ſo much repugnance to go on the road,
"and had better ſucceſs: my ſhare of that
"night's ſpoil, amounted to five pounds.
"When I went home, ſhe congratulated
"me on my ſucceſs: and boaſted of her
"having been the means of putting me in
"a way of getting money ſe eaſily. The
"third night was that in which I met
"with you: we had robbed a gentleman
"of three guineas, I had taken the money,
"and had it in my pocket, when you
"knocked me and my companion down;
"the other deſerted us. Little did I ex-
"pect ſuch lenity: but the reproof ſunk
"deep into my heart, and I was not ſo
"hardened, but I felt the force and truth
"of it. When we quitted you, and went

"off, I determined to forſake my companions "and the town at once. I told the man "that was with me, that it would be "ſuſpicious for us to go into town toge-"ther, and that we had better ſeparate, "and meet at the rendezvous at the ap-"pointed hour. He accordingly went one "way, and I another: and I made dire-"ctly for the road that led homewards. I "travelled all night: and by the help of "a returned poſt-chaiſe or two, proceeded "a great way in my journey. How did "I rejoice at eſcaping from the puniſhment "my crimes deſerved! How much did I "commend my own reſolution, in not "going back to ſee the woman who intro-"duced me into the road of deſtruction. I "might have been ſeduced by her wiles, "and prevailed on by her blandiſhments, "to have returned to the ſame dreadful "courſe. On the ſecond night I reſted: "but my ſleep was broken and diſturbed "by the moſt horrid dreams. I roſe by "the firſt dawn of the morning; and the "farther I went from the deteſted ſcene "of my guilt, the happier I was. At "length I reached home, and was receiv-"ed kindly. The ſteward being dead, I

"am in poſſeſſion of his place: and hope "that my offences are forgotten and for- "given both by God and man."

"I have no doubt but they are," ſaid Wills, "if you have truly repented of "them. I am glad to ſee you reſtored to "peace and happineſs."

"You were the cauſe, and you have "the merit of it. But pray, Sir, will you "excuſe me, if I aſk you what buſineſs "brought you down here in this dreſs, "which I am ſure is not fitting for you."

"A cauſe, that I cannot reveal."

"Can I ſerve you, Sir? Will you give "me leave to gueſs at the cauſe? Pray, "did not you reſcue Miſs Juliet Harcourt "from imminent danger, ſome time ago?"

"How did you come to the knowl- "edge of that?" ſaid Wills, ſtarting, and looking angrily.

"Don't be offended, Sir: I imagine it "muſt be you, by the deſcription ſhe has "very often given to my ſiſter of your "perſon: and if I can judge from your "looks in church this day, it was ſhe

"who was the occaſion of your coming to "this part of the country."

"Friend" replied Wills, "ceaſe your "ſurmiſes."

"I will, Sir; but my life is devoted "to your ſervice; make uſe of it."

"You judge but too truly, Johnſon," ſaid Wills with a ſigh: "I will truſt you, "and will not entertain a doubt of your "fidelity. I doat on her to diſtraction; my "life is wrapped up in her, and I would "venture a thouſand deaths to ſerve her: "but I would not cauſe her any uneaſi- "neſs from her father on my account, for "the univerſe: tell me, if you know "whether the ſweet girl is diſengaged."

JOHNSON told him he believed ſhe was as yet; but heard ſomething of a Lord who was to pay his addreſſes to her ſoon: "However, if you have a meſſage or a "letter to ſend her, I will deliver it to "her. We have been children together, "and her affability and good nature make "her the idol of the whole country."

"BUT" ſaid Wills, "if it ſhould be "known to Sir Lionel that you have acted

"in this manner, will not he take your "place from you?"

"FEAR not," ſaid he; "it will never "come to his knowledge. I will run any "riſque to ſerve you: and if your baſhful- "neſs ſhould prevent you, I will venture "to tell her your errand here.

"WELL," ſaid he, "I will employ you: "let us ſtep into your father's, and there "I will write to her."

IN the way to the houſe, Johnſon informed him, that Sir Lionel's eſtate amounted now to above four thouſand a year; that his daughters would have all his fortune, and Juliet, who was his favourite, the greater ſhare of it. He then launched forth in her praiſe, enumerated her many good qualities, and her ſuperior accompliſhments; tho' there was no ſort of occaſion for this, as Wills's paſſion did not ſtand in need of any augmentation. Before he went into the houſe, he told Johnſon that it would be very prudent to conceal the cauſe of their knowledge from his father and ſiſter, which was agreed to for the preſent; "but I ſhall acquaint them "with it before you go," ſaid he, "and

"in the mean time shall tell them you are "my best friend, and insist upon their "silence in regard to you."

When they entered, they found Lawson and the old man in deep conversation. The subject was Miss Harcourt, whom they informed him had been there the day before; and also acquainted him, that the aunt and cousin were gone back to London, as it was to visit them she went there, and they returned into the country with her. Lawson had been amusing the old man, during Wills's absence, with a story of their intention to take a farm in the neighbourhood; and he recommended his son Bob, as a good judge of land, to assist them: but when they entered this was put an end to; and Bob, calling his father into the parlour with Wills, informed him he was a gentleman to whom he was under the greatest of all obligations, and desired him to treat him accordingly and for his life not to mention a syllable of it. He promised very faithfully to be silent. Wills then calling in Lawson, informed him what a friend he had found in this young man; and writing materials being prepared, he sat down to form the letter. But this was

by no means an eaſy taſk: and while he is puzzling his brain how he ſhall addreſs the fair object of his deſires, Lawſon and Bob having left him to himſelf, we ſhall follow them, and take the opportunity of concluding this chapter.

CHAPTER XXX.

A view of the inſide of the houſe at Pinehill: a letter, and its effects.

LAWSON, when he got Bob out of the hearing of the houſe, began to aſk him many queſtions about Juliet; for it never once entered his head to enquire how his acquaintance with Wills commenced; that was very indifferent to him, ſo he could render his friend any ſervice. For true it is, that Lawſon had the ſincereſt friendſhip for Wills; but, at the ſame time, thought him very ridiculous in ſome things; and he looked on his conduct, in others, to ſet him above the ordinary race of mortals. Johnſon, finding him to be Wills's particular and intimate confidant in this affair, anſwered all his

queſtions with the greateſt readineſs; and added ſome circumſtances which ſhe had mentioned, concerning the perſon who ruſhed into the water to reſcue her, ſo favourably, that it contributed to keep up Lawſon's ſpirits upon the occaſion. This, however, they both agreed not to tell the lover, leſt there might be a diſappointment, and it would look as if Johnſon wanted to carry favour with him. They then returned to Wills, who had, by this time, finiſhed his letter, and was ſealing it as they came in. Johnſon told him, that he ſhould have an anſwer to morrow evening, and ſhould expect to meet him at his father's. They then parted; Wills and Lawſon went to their habitation, and Johnſon returned to Pinehill. "Heaven," ſaid Wills, when he got to the ſummit of the hill, "Heaven be witneſs, I could ſtay "here only to look at the houſe that con-"tains my Juliet. My imagination would "trace her through all the different amuſe-"ments of the day; would attend her like "a guardian ſpirit, warding off all miſchief "and evil, and ſhowering down peace and "comfort continually on her."

"Upon my word," ſaid Lawſon, "you "ſentimental lovers are a very rational, "agreeable ſet of beings: but you enjoy "all the pleaſure yourſelves."

"That I believe," replied Wills; "but "we can communicate it to others, if they "are not inſenſible."

"Yes, I ſuppoſe ſo — to the objects of "your affections."

"To the moſt indifferent perſons in "the world," ſaid Wills, walking on, "if "they have not loſt all ſenſe. For inſtance; "I'll engage the author of the *Man of Feel-* "*ing*, with whom, by the bye, I had "rather be acquainted, than the firſt Peer "in the land, experienced all the pleaſu- "res and pains attendant on the moſt de- "licate and refined paſſion, which you may "call ſentimental, if you pleaſe. If he had "not, he could never have affected his "readers ſo much. I only ſpeak for my- "ſelf. When I read it, there were ſome "ſounds, that my heart was then in uni- "ſon to, and they vibrated together; con- "ſequently I received more pleaſure than "any body elſe, that had not the ſame "ſenſations, could poſſibly do. If poor

"Brewer had been alive, he would have "admired thoſe precepts of humanity and "general benevolence that are ſo ſtrongly "inculcated in it, and have found out the "author. One thing I am ſure of, that "he muſt have been in love, and I fear "his paſſion was hopeleſs: It may be my "own caſe ſoon."

Lawson, ſtill earneſt in perſuading him that he was agreeable in Miſs Harcourt's eyes, would not ſuffer him to indulge ſo melancholy a reflection.

We ſhall therefore leave him thus employed, and follow Johnſon to Pine-hill. But firſt, it will be neceſſary to inform our readers how Juliet ſtood affected. It may be imagined, from the converſation that paſſed between Wills and her while he was accompanying her to the chariot, that ſhe did not look upon him in a diſagreeable light; and her good opinion of him was encreaſed by the praiſes her aunt and couſin beſtowed upon him during the remainder of the journey. The truth is, that ſhe could not help wiſhing that he would put his promiſe in execution, of coming to ſee her, though ſhe had no ſort of opinion that he would be as well received as ſhe

wiſhed he ſhould be by her father. When the ſtory was related to him, he commended the young fellow's ſpirit greatly; and, as he was very fond of his daughter, would have rewarded him, juſt at that moment, handſomely: but he forgot it ſoon again. Not thus the gentle, the amiable Juliet; her heart was affected by the generous and gallant behaviour of her deliverer, and ſhe could not help forming a wiſh, that ſhe had it in her power to reward him: and thus ſhe often expreſſed herſelf to Nanny, whom ſhe uſed frequently to converſe with. In talking the matter over, her father would frequently inſinuate, that he might be ſome young farmer, or ſmart Londoner, who, though of an inferior rank in life, there is ſcarcely a poſſibility of diſtinguiſhing from a gentleman. Though his addreſs and language appeared to her very different, yet ſhe did not know but her father's ſurmiſes might be juſt; and it gave riſe to many a ſigh. Yet ſhe could hardly conceive, that ſuch a perſon would attempt to make a promiſe to pay her a viſit at her father's. Theſe cogitations employed her imagination; and the generous ſtranger retained a

place in her remembrance, that would have given him much pleaſure, had he known it. The very day that Wills and his friend arrived at Pine-hill, her aunt and couſin returned to London. The day after ſhe paid a viſit to her old friend Nanny, who, being in raptures with the handſome gueſt that had been at har father's the day before, was very laviſh in his praiſes. Nanny, who imagined the gentleman ſhe had heard Juliet deſcribe ſo favourably was a rich and a grand man, could never conceive, nor did it ever enter into her head, that he could be dreſſed in ſuch plain cloaths as Wills appeared in. Juliet, who knew very well that love was capable of aſſuming many diſguiſes, liſtened very attentively to her deſcription; and could not help thinking, that it muſt be this gentleman who had come to pay her the viſit he had promiſed. This made her little heart flutter with joy. But, as ſhe returned home, ſhe could not forbear from entertaining ſome reflexions very prejudicial to Wills's fortune and character: and ſhe feared that her father's ſuſpicions were but too true concerning him. She found alſo, that ſhe had indulged herſelf in thinking

oftener and more favourably of him than prudence would juſtify, conſidering her total ignorance of him. Her reſolutions, in conſequence of theſe thoughts, bore very hardly againſt her lover; nevertheleſs ſhe could not help wiſhing to ſee him. And how much ſhe was ſurpriſed, and what ſhe felt, at the ſight of him, we have already informed our readers.

When ſhe returned home, ſhe indulged her own reflections; for Sir Lionel was too much engaged in the conſideration of his own importance, to condeſcend to look at any body in the church, or to diſturb her with any ſuſpicions. Many gentlemen of the country dined there that day, who came to congratulate Sir Lionel on his acceſſion to the title and fortune; and conſequently, Juliet, who retired ſoon after dinner, had time enough to ruminate on her ſituation, and the viſit and appearance of her lover: for ſhe very juſtly concluded that it was upon her account he came into the country. And here we muſt own, that Juliet could not but ſtifle, for a time, the inſinuation of prudence, and indulge the pleaſing ſenſations the ſight of him had given her. In the midſt of theſe reflec-

tions, her maid brought her word, that Mr. Johnſon, the ſteward, begged to ſee her, about ſomething he had to ſay to her. She deſired he might be ſent up; and, in the mean time, was a little anxious to know what was the meaning of this meſſage. Johnſon appeared: the maid departed, and left them by themſelves.

"WELL, Mr. Johnſon, what is your "buſineſs with me?"

"I am come, Miſs Juliet, upon an ex-"traordinary errand; and, I hope, you "won't be angry with me."

"No certainly: In am ſure you would "do nothing to deſerve my anger. But "what is this errand?"

"IT is to bring you this letter, Ma-"dam."

"FROM whom, Sir, pray?"

"WHEN you read it, you will be in-"formed, Madam."

"INDEED, Mr. Johnſon, I ſhall not, un-"leſs I know whom it comes from."

"Mr. Wills, Madam, desired me to "present it to you."

"I don't know any such person, but I "will read it; it may be concerning some "business."

She turned to the window, and breaking open the seal with a trembling hand, read as follows.

Madam,

From the hour I first saw you, your lovely image has never quitted my eyes, nor your idea my remembrance. Unable to remain at such a distance from you, I have ventured to appear in your presence. But how shall I excuse myself, or tell you the purpose for which I am come hither? My presumption, I fear, will induce my punishment. A stranger, and without any recommendation, am I come here, to ask you to think favourably of me. Though my station in life, and the prospects of fortune, now unhappily obscured, would once have entitled me to have made such proposals to Sir Lionel, as might, with your approbation, have proved agreeable; yet to none of these can I pretend now,

and all I have to offer in my own behalf, is, that I love you with the moſt ardent and pure affection; and that, had not the fear of being ſupplanted by a rich and powerful rival, almoſt driven me to diſtraction, I had not dared to acquaint you with a paſſion I determined to bury in ſilence, till ſome favourable opportunity offered of declaring it, and making myſelf in ſome degree worthy of your hand. On your mercy, Madam, I throw myſelf. Terrified with the fears of loſing you for ever, I only wiſh to know my fate from your lips: and if I ſhall be baniſhed from your ſight, miſery and deſpair muſt be my portion. Permit me to aſſure you that I am and ever ſhall be, with the trueſt affection and the moſt ſincere reſpect,

Madam,

Your devoted ſervant,

FRANCIS WILLS.

WHEN ſhe had finiſhed it, ſhe turned about to Johnſon, and aſked him if he knew the purport of the letter which he had brought her? He replied, "he believed he did."

"And how could you preſume to bring "me an addreſs from a man whom I know "nothing of, and whom you, perhaps, "don't know? If my father was informed "of this proceeding, I am ſure he would "be extremely angry."

"I am ſure he would, Madam: but I "would encounter any danger to ſerve the "gentleman that wrote you that letter."

"It is a very extraordinary one," ſaid ſhe; "and I deſire you may tell him, that "I ſhall receive no more letters from "him."

"That meſſage will break his heart, "Miſs Juliet; and if you knew how good, "how noble and generous he is, you "would have ſome pity on him."

"How came you to be ſo well acquaint-"ed with him, that you ſhould know his "virtues ſo well?"

"Oh! Madam, I have reaſon to know "them; I am under the greateſt obliga-"tions to him.

"Whatever they may be," ſaid ſhe, "it is very improper and imprudent in me

"to carry on a correſpondence with him: "and ſo make him that anſwer."

"Oh!" ſaid Johnſon: throwing himſelf on his knees before her, "do not make "me the means of driving ſo worthy and "ſo amiable a young gentleman to ruin and "diſtraction."

Juliet, who was extremely ſurprized at his emotions, and his taking Wills's part ſo ſtrenuouſly, bade him riſe; and inſiſted upon knowing the cauſe of his being ſo much attached to him, Johnſon, though it was very diſagreeable to him to repeat his ſtory, thought, nevertheleſs, that it might influence her in his favour: and, after entreating her to be ſecret, and telling her that he put his life into her hands, he related his whole hiſtory; enlarging on Wills's generoſity and clemency, the manner of his meeting him near the park wall and the converſation they had that day together. Juliet's feelings, during this relation, are not eaſily deſcribed: ſhe ſhuddered with horror at the danger Johnſon, who had been bred up with her from a child, was plunged in. Her heart throbbed with joy, when ſhe heard of Wills's

behaviour: and ſhe no leſs admired his delicacy in the conduct he preſerved with Johnſon. Juliet's mind was as amiable as her perſon was lovely. With all the tender ſenſibility of the ſex, ſhe poſſeſſed a great ſhare of good ſenſe; and her talents, naturally bright, were improved by education. Her heart, therefore, could not help approving thoſe ſentiments in Wills, which bore ſo great a reſemblance to her own. "Really," ſaid ſhe, "Mr. "Johnſon," after a long pauſe, I cannot "blame your earneſtneſs to ſerve this gentle-"man: your ſituation was terrible indeed, "if he had not been ſo merciful. I don't "know what to ſay."

Johnson thought now was his time to aſſiſt his friend effectually: he ſaid ſo many things in his praiſe, and ſpoke ſo much of his deſpondency, and the dreadful conſequences of her refuſing to ſee him, that he happily prevailed with her to give him a favourable anſwer. She aſked when he ſhould ſee him again: and being informed: "Well, if it is poſſibile, I will be there, "and hear from him what he would have." As ſhe ſpoke, a bluſh overſpread her face; and, unwilling that Johnſon ſhould be a

witneſs of her confuſion, ſhe went into another appartment: and he, overjoyed at the ſucceſs of his embaſſy, departed.

When the charming Juliet was alone, ſhe read over the letter ſeveral times. She reflected on what Johnſon had told her; and found, upon caſting up the account in her own boſom, there was a balance in favour of what ſhe had heard of Wills's principles: however, ſhe determined to act very circumſpectly: and though ſhe would not wiſh to diſobey her father, yet the melancholy example her ſiſter afforded her, made her reſolve to oppoſe his will, that would only by complying with it make her wretched.

Johnson was ſo pleaſed at the favourable reception he met with, that he ſet out early in the morning to acquaint Wills with it; having firſt given his father ſome hints of what he was to expect in the evening, renewing his charge to him to keep the moſt profound ſilence. His arrival ſurprized both Wills and Lawſon; and each had their different ſentiments of the matter. But when he told them what ſhe had ſaid, an indifferent ſpectator would

have ſuppoſed that Lawſon had been the favoured lover: for he embraced Johnſon with much fervency, and capered about the room with great agility, whilſt Wills ſat ſpeechleſs and thoughtful. However, he thanked Johnſon heartily, and keeping him to dinner, in the afternoon they all ſet out together for the white Hart.

CHAPTER XXXI.

An interview, which ſome of our readers will, and ſome will not, like.

WILLS was by no means ſociable company: he was revolving in his mind in what manner he ſhould addreſs Juliet. He felt unuſual perturbations: and his mind was never in ſuch a ſtate, or was he ever leſs collected, than at that moment. Johnſon and Lawſon, whoſe feelings were not ſo delicate, and whoſe ſentiments were leſs refined, amuſed themſelves very agreeably during the walk: for Lawſon entertained a great reſpect for his companion, who had ſo far advanced Wills's affairs in ſo ſhort a time. They at length

arrived at the father's houſe, and found Juliet, the lovely Juliet, there. If her confuſion was great, Wills's equalled it. She firſt was able to tell him; that ſhe had not forgot his generoſity in reſcuing her from a dreadful death, and that ſhe ſhould always retain a moſt grateful ſenſe of it. Wills, who bluſhed exceedingly while ſhe ſpoke, muttered, juſt ſufficiently loud, to be intelligible, that "it was the "happieſt hour of his life in which he had "rendered her any ſervice."

"I believe," ſaid Miſs Harcourt, "that "gentleman," turning to Lawſon, "was "alſo aſſiſting you, and is likewiſe entitled "to my thanks."

"THEY overpay the ſervice infinitely, "Madam," returned Lawſon.

"Ah," ſaid old Johnſon, "if the vil-"lagers here knew that theſe gentlemen "had ſaved you, they would have made a "bonfire for 'um."

So ſaying, he went out, his ſon and Lawſon following him ſoon after. Nanny was called out about ſome domeſtic buſineſs, and the amiable couple were left

alone. They remained ſilent for a ſhort time: and Wills could not, for the ſoul of him, utter a ſyllable. His eyes were fixed on the ground, and he ſat in a ſtate of ſeeming ſtupefaction. Miſs Harcourt drew him from his reverie. "To a gentleman, "to whom I owe ſuch an obligation, I "may be excuſable in thus tranſgreſsing "the rules of propriety. I was honoured "with a letter from you, Sir; and I will "not pretend to miſunderſtand your mean-"ing: But, But, Sir —"

"'Tis true, Madam, that I attempted "to make you acquainted with a paſſion, "that I conceived for you, the moment "that I was ſo happy as to ſave a life that "is much dearer to me than my own: but "it is impoſſible to acquaint you with the "ſincerity of my heart, or the devotion "with which I behold you. I am a ſtran-"ger, thus honoured by your condeſcen-"ſion: and only worthy of it, by the pu-"rity and honour of my affection."

While he ſpoke, his eyes ſparkled with inexpreſſible vivacity, and his modeſt diffidence added a bluſh to the natural bloom of his cheeks: but his voice faltered, and

he hesitated while he spoke. His manner plainly indicated perturbations.

"This declaration, Sir, I am by no "means at liberty to hear. If my father "should sanctify —"

"Hear me, Madam," said he, interrupting her: "my tongue is a stranger to "deceit, and truth is the language of my "heart: therefore I will not impose upon "her whom my soul loveth. If pecuniary "qualifications must gain you, alas! I "shall lose you for ever." He therefore informed her who he was, his connexions and prospects, and how he had lost his aunt's favour, though he concealed the occasion of it. He also acquainted her with his present situation, and, assuring her that, from the hour she had told him she was disengaged, he had entertained the fondest hopes of proving acceptable to her, and had flattered himself that she would give him leave to devote his life to her service, but that these were killed by despair, when he heard of the rank and wealth of Sir Lionel, and found that a nobleman was to become her suitor, and that too by the consent of her father.

"And now charming Miſs Harcourt, I "have opened my heart to you. I con- "feſs my own unworthineſs, and how lit- "tle I merit the poſſeſſion of your hand: "however, it will be ſome ſatisfaction to "me to think, that I ſhall have had the "happineſs of acquainting you with my "paſſion, hopeleſs as it is, before I aban- "don myſelf to deſpair." He ceaſed: and Juliet lifting up her eyes, ſaw a big tear ſtand trembling in his, and perceived how much his whole frame was agitated.

"Sir," replied Juliet, "I have every "reaſon to believe what you ſay; but my "father has conceived ſuch notions of my "ſhining in a ſphere of life that may be "very grand, and very miſerable, that he "would never conſent to liſten to any pro- "poſals you could make him."

"I know it, and it adds to my miſe- "ry: I ſee it, I ſee it, Miſs Harcourt; I "never ſhall meet Sir Lionel's approbation, "and I never will tempt his daughter to "an act of diſobedience. I will be wretch- "ed, but not criminal: and all my conſo- "lation will be, that I ſhall adore you, "and you only, while I live."

"THESE exalted ſentiments, are very "conſiſtent with Mr. Wills's character."

"MINE, Madam? alas! it is unknown "to you!"

No, indeed, Sir. Mr. Johnſon, who "was your ſtrenuous advocate, informed "me of you generoſity and humanity: "and it would be unjuſt not to allow you "the praiſe due to your merit. Indeed, "Sir, I wiſh I could reward it."

"OH, Miſs Harcourt, it is only in "your power to bleſs me beyond the race "of man. My preſumptuous hopes would "prompt me to requeſt you to pity my "paſſion, and believe, my ſincere attach- "ment to you can only be diſſolved by "death, and to entreat you to allow me "hereafter to approach you, when I may "be better able to avow my affection. "But when I conſider this conceſſion will "bring you into endleſs trouble, and oc- "caſion you ſo many evils; my heart, "terrified at the leaſt apprehenſions of any "thing that can give you uneaſineſs, will "forego its deareſt hopes, to contribute "to your eaſe or happineſs. Therefore, "lovely Juliet, I will reſign my ill-fated "pretenſions, and, at an humble diſtance

"from the object of my wiſhes, pray in-
"ceſſantly for your eternal felicity."

His voice was ſcarcely audible as he pronounced the laſt words, and he hung his head upon his breaſt in ſilent dejection.

"I don't think riches can conſtitute
"happineſs, Mr. Wills," ſaid Juliet: "We
"have a ſad example in our family alrea-
"dy of the truth of that obſervation: and
"I aſſure you, my father ſhall never force
"me to marry a man I don't like."

"Will you, then, give me leave to
"hope? O! amiable maid, didſt thou but
"know the ſcenes of happineſs which I
"had traced out in my romantic imagina-
"tion to enjoy with you! but they were
"deluſive dreams of a diſturbed fancy: I
"muſt never know what bliſs or true joy
"is! My tranſports will be too powerful
"for my reaſon and diſtraction will enſue."

Indeed Juliet began to be of the ſame opinion; for his voice was more elevated than before, and ſhe thought ſhe perceived a wildneſs in his eyes, that alarmed her.
"Your reaſon ſhould not ſuffer itſelf to be

"overpowered: I would contribute every "thing in my power to —"

"THEN do not forbid me to hope," ſaid he eagerly. "Tell me, that, ſhould "fortune be propitious, and I ſhould be "reſtored to my aunt's favour, you would "admit me to breathe out my vows of "unalterable love at your feet. Speak, "too charming Juliet: ſpeak, and tell me "my fate at once."

"I wiſh I could render it agreeable to "you, Mr. Wills: but what muſt your "opinion of me be, who thus have made "an appointment with you. Oh, I ſhall "die with ſhame to think on it!"

"WHAT ſhall I think, Miſs Harcourt, "of you? As of one of thoſe ſuperior "beings ſent to comfort and remove the "woes attendant on our natures: pure, "innocent, and the object of our adora- "tion. But my paſſion is founded in truth "and honour, and ſuperior to forms. My "misfortunes require extraordinary conſo- "lation. Tell me you do not hate me: "bid me hope, and I ſhall be happy."

"After the ſervice you have rendered "me, I cannot hate you. And will own "to you ingenuouſly, that I know no man "with whom I would more willingly "ſpend my life."

Wills was on his knees at her feet: her hand, a willing priſoner in his, was preſſed to his lips. His raptures were inexpreſſible, his joy tumultuous, His thanks were broken ſentences, unconnected phraſes: they were eloquent to her. In a ſhort time he became more compoſed; and the moment approaching in which ſhe muſt return, ſhe told him, that the next day ſhe ſhould go to Mrs. Mannington's, her ſiſter, where ſhe could have an opportunity of ſeeing him with leſs conſtraint than in the place ſhe then was; that ſhe and her ſiſter had ever poſſeſſed the greateſt friendſhip for each other, and the moſt unreſerved confidence; and that if he would take the trouble of following her there, that her brother was too much engaged with his amuſement to trouble himſelf about his wife, and they might ſee each other with more liberty in the preſence of her ſiſter. Wills promiſed faithfully to follow her; aſſured her of his gratitude and

his love; aud preſſing her unreſiſting hand to his lips, trembling with joy, he parted from her very unwillingly.

LAWSON, who anxiouſly waited the event of this interview, not but that he had promiſed himſelf the moſt agreeable and fortunate conſequences from it, was very glad when it was over, that he might know the truth of the matter: but this he could not do immediately; for his friend took young Johnſon aſide, and conferred with him ſome time. The ſubject of their converſation was nothing more than Wills's thanking him for the token of his friendſhip in conveying his letter, and ſpeaking ſo favourably of him; "I aſſure you, Sir," replied Johnſon, "that the life you ſaved, "is devoted to your ſervice."

"It is time to forget that now," ſaid Wills, and, joining Lawſon, they proceeded towards their lodging at Nantwich.

WILLS could not refuſe to tell him the ſucceſs of his negociation; it was no more than Lawſon expected. And, when Wills talked in raptures of her condeſcenſion and goodneſs, and praiſed her ingenuouſneſs in the moſt fervent and exalted terms, he

ſaid, it was no more than he foretold all along, and hoped that Wills would, for the future, pay more reſpect and attention to his prophecies. In the mean time, he rejoiced very heartily to ſee his friend's wiſhes crowned with ſucceſs.

HAVING informed themſelves of the road that led to Mr. Mannington's, they ſet out, the day but one, after this, to meet Miſs Harcourt at her ſiſter's. They arrived there, when the 'Squire was engaged at his bottle, with his fellow ſportſmen: and our friends, who had enquired for Miſs Harcourt, were introduced to the ladies. It is not to be doubted, but Juliet informed her ſiſter of every particular; and ſhe very honeſtly encouraged her in her intentions of being happy with the man ſhe eſteemed, in any ſtate, rather than live ſplendidly with the man ſhe hated. "But "Juliet," ſays ſhe, "let me have an op-"portunity of ſeeing this man, who has "made ſuch a hole in your heart. Misfor-"tune, my dear ſiſter, has taught me pru-"dence and experience. I will give you "my opinion."

WHEN Wills and Lawſon entered the

room, ſhe was not at all at a loſs to fix upon Juliet's choice, and conceived a good opinion of him from the moment ſhe ſaw him; and after tea, taking a walk in the garden, Lawſon entertained Miſs Harcourt, and Mrs. Mannington faſtened herſelf upon Wills. There are many people, whoſe openneſs of countenance prepoſſeſſes us in their favour at the firſt ſight; and whoſe words, delivered with the conſcious confidence of integrity, carry conviction along with them. This was Wills's ſituation, and he ſoon made a friend of Mrs. Mannington. They then changed companions; and ſhe gave Wills an opportunity of aſſuring his dear Juliet of his eternal fidelity; vows, which ſhe was not at all diſpleaſed at hearing, and he had the pleaſure to find ſhe approved them.

Mrs. Mannington appointed Wills to call on her alone the next morning, at an hour when ſhe knew the 'Squire would be after his hounds: and hinted, that his coming alone would be agreeable. He accordingly attended her at the appointed time, and he met his Juliet with her. Mrs. Mannington had ſo good an opinion of Wills's

honour and ſincerity, that ſhe made no ſcruple of taking his part before his miſtreſs: and told her, that there was no reaſon, if ſhe believed he loved her, why they ſhould make each other unhappy by concealing their ſentiments: that prudence forbad them, and the laws prevented their entering into any other engagements, or forming any other ties, than thoſe which proceeded from the mutual inclination of two virtuous hearts. "The knowledge "of each others affections, will make the "time of probation paſs more happily," ſaid ſhe; and added, with a ſmile, as ſhe quitted the room, that "ſhe would be "guarantee for Mr. Wills." Emboldened by the encouragement he had met with from Mrs. Mannington, he ventured to preſs his Juliet to an explanation: and ſhe generouſly aſſured him of her eſteem for him. They maintained a happy converſation for near two hours, without perceiving how the time ſlipped away. On his part, it was ſupported with joy, gratitude, and love, mingled with the moſt delicate reſpect. On hers, with tenderneſs and pleaſure, corrected with a modeſt reſerve: Yet he ventured, not without obtain-

ing pardon for his offence, to approach her lips, and print a fervid kiſs on them.

Mrs. Mannington, at laſt, thought it high time to put an end to their converſation; and ſhe came into the room. "I "find" ſaid ſhe, "that you have agreed "very well together, and have not been "quarelling or fighting." They both returned her their thanks for the part ſhe took in their affairs; and renewed, before her, their vows of unalterable conſtancy, in whatever changes might happen to them. Mrs. Mannington told them, from the ſimilarity of their diſpoſitions ſhe imagined they were formed for each other; and wiſhing them all imaginable happineſs; informed Wills ſhe ſhould expect him and his friend the next evening to drink tea, as ſhe and her ſiſter were engaged to dine and ſpend that day out. Wills promiſed to be there. He took leave of the ladies, and ſought Lawſon.

CHAPTER XXXII.

The arrival of a viſitor. A change in affairs: And wherein it is ſhown, that it is every bit as eaſy to tell a lie as a truth, eſpecially when a man is uſed to it.

WILLS went over early in the afternoon to Mrs. Mannington's, in hopes of having a little private converſation with his beloved Juliet: in this he was not diſappointed. Mrs. Mannington took care to let them be together in their little walks, amuſing herſelf with Lawſon, whoſe ſpringhtlineſs rendered him very agreeable to her. Juliet indulged her lover, by ſupporting herſelf in her walk with his arm. He uttered a thouſand tender and paſſionate things, that equally tended to convince her of his affection, and his good ſenſe; for he avoided the beaten road of flattery, and his praiſes and compliments were ſo artfully and politely introduced, that they ſeemed to flow naturally in the converſation, and not as the reſult of ſtudy and deſign. Pleaſed with each other, and as happy as they could be, they began to conſider their union not far diſtant: and Wills talked of returning to London, and mak-

ing ſome attempts at a reconciliation with his aunt. In this delightful intercourſe of ſouls they ſtrayed, 'till Mrs. Mannington warned them that it was near tea-time. They returned, and the converſation became general. Mr. Mannington was gone acroſs the country upon ſome ſporting party, and not expected to return for three or four days: ſo the lovers promiſed themſelves many happy meetings in the mean time. Lawſon now had ſet all ill or adverſe fortune at defiance. The poſſeſſion of Juliet's heart, in his opinion, ſecured every thing elſe; and it was not to be doubted but Wills was pretty ſure of that. They were therefore all chearful and happy; and Lawſon, encreaſed the general good humour by ſeveral little ſucceſsful ſallies. They had already drank one cup of tea, when a ſervant announced the arrival of a gentleman in a poſtchaiſe and four, who had a letter from Sir Lionel to deliver to Miſs Harcourt; and added, that there were coronets on the carriage. Wills turned pale at this information, dreading the advent of his rival. Juliet, however ſhe might be apprehenſive of the ſame thing, gave him a look, which ſerv-

ed in part to diſpel his fears, and reaſſure him. But how was he aſtoniſhed, when he ſaw Mrs. Mannington, who had gone to receive her noble viſitor, return, followed by the identical Lord Cotſwold, whom we have celebrated for his politeneſs, juſtice, and gallantry, in the former part of this delectable hiſtory. He approached Juliet with the moſt reſpectful politeneſs; and aſſuring her how much he thought himſelf honoured by being the meſſenger of her father's commands, delivered the letter into her hands. She begged leave to read it, and found it contained a command for her to return to Pine-hill with his Lordſhip, whoſe affectionate deſire to ſee her could not be reſtrained, and who had taken that trouble to conduct her in ſafety himſelf. Wills, whoſe eyes were fixed upon her while ſhe read the letter, perceived her change colour; and imagined every thing that was bad. Lord Cotſwold was too much taken up in contemplating Juliet's charms, which he had both leiſure and opportunity for, while ſhe was looking over her father's letter, to conſider any body elſe in the room. When ſhe had done, ſhe returned

her thanks to his Lordſhip for the trouble he had taken, declared her readineſs to attend him; and then explained the matter to her ſiſter. Wills was now loſt to hope and to reaſon, and began to debate with himſelf, whether he ſhould not call his Lordſhip to an account for the treatment he had formerly received from him. It was at this moment, that his Lordſhip recollected Wills's face and perſon, thro' the difference of his dreſs; neither did he forget his name. Surprized to ſee him there, he could not account for it. He watched him, and thought he ſaw ſome looks paſs between Juliet and him, that did not pleaſe him. He kept up the converſation during tea, in an eaſy familiarity, with Mrs. Mannington and Juliet, who, however, ſpoke but little. Wills remained totally ſilent; and Lawſon, affected by the change in his friend's countenance, had loſt his gaiety. When the tea was over, Juliet acquainted his Lordſhip, that ſhe was ready whenever he pleaſed; and being told, "when it ſuited her," ſhe juſt ſtepped up ſtairs to throw on a cloak, and, in the mean time, the carriage was ordered out. Mrs. Mannington lamended to his

Lordſhip the abſence of her huſband, as ſhe was not capable of receiving him in a proper manner. He interrupted her, and paying her ſome polite compliments, Juliet put an end to them, by entering into the room dreſsed for her journey. His Lordſhip bowed to the friends very coolly. Juliet had juſt time to give Wills a look, unperceived by any body elſe; and my lord handed her to the door, attended by Mrs. Mannington. Wills followed them with his eyes: but they ſoon vaniſhed out of his ſight. He heard the carriage drive off, and his torment became inſupportable.

"Do you know Lord Cotſwold?" ſaid Lawſon.

"But too well," replied Wills: "and, "but for the preſence of my Juliet, whoſe "gentle breaſt I would not diſturb for the "world, he ſhould have known me too."

"Lord," rejoined Lawſon, I never heard "you mention a word of him."

"That may be: but I'll tell you as "we go homewards, which will be ſhort"ly now."

When Mrs. Mannington returned, ſhe found Wills traverſing the room with a quick pace, and a dejected countenance. "Ah! Madam," ſaid he, "the amiable, the "excellent Juliet is loſt to me for ever, "I fear."

"You have but a bad opinion of her, if "you imagine ſhe can ſo eaſily forget you."

"Ah! have not I every thing to fear "from the quality of my rival, and the "commands of her father in his favour?"

Mrs. Mannington endeavoured to reinſpire him with hope; and as ſhe had conceived a very ſincere regard for him, aſſured him, that Juliet had the tendereſt eſteem for him: "but," ſaid ſhe, "are not you ac- "quainted with his Lordſhip? he ſeemed to "eye you with great particularity." Wills confeſſed he had ſeen him once, and known a little of him in his late wife's time: and all Mrs. Mannington's queſtions could not prevail on him to tell her any more. After thanking her in the moſt grateful and ſincere manner, for the intereſt ſhe took in his affairs, and aſſuring her he ſhould ever remember it, he departed with his friend Lawſon,

and, with an heavy heart, they took their road to the inn.

WILLS walked on, without ſaying a word for a long time; till Lawſon, unwilling to indulge his melancholy any longer, and alſo eager to know how he became acquainted with Lord Cotſwold, reminded him of his promiſe. Wills complied with his deſire, and informed him of every circumſtance, which his delicacy prevented his repeating when he had related his hiſtory to Lawſon before. "And I was in ſome doubt," added Wills, "whether I ſhould not return his "lordſhip's former inſults to me: but when "I conſidered it would engage me in quarrel, "and in the preſence of Juliet, I determined "to wait for a proper opportunity, which I "have no doubt will ſoon happen."

"FAITH," replied Lawſon, "I ſhould "have been apt to have ſparred at him, and "brought on an explanation: it would have "been ſome comfort to have acquainted "Miſs Harcourt with the temper and diſpoſition."

"IT would have looked mean and baſe "in me to have done ſo. Why ſhould I "endeavour to raiſe my own character up-

"on the ruin of another man's? Beſides, "conſidering I was an intereſted party, it "might be very juſtly ſuppoſed that I did "not adhere ſo cloſely to truth as I ought "to have done. For all theſe conſidera-"tions, and finding that he took no notice "of me, I was reſolved to wait for a more "favourable ſeaſon to acquaint him with my "reſentment; which I aſſure you, Lawſon, "I have not forgot."

"WELL," ſaid Lawſon, "you may think "this right; but I ſhould have laid open "his character at once before them all, or "at leaſt ſhould have told Mrs. Manning-"ton, who appears your very good friend."

"PERHAPS you might have ſucceeded "better, Lawſon: but you know I have "ſtrange notions of my own."

WITH theſe melancholy reflections, and depreſſed ſpirits, did they beguile the te-dious way that led them to Nantwich.

IN the mean time lord Corſwold, with the lovely Juliet by his ſide, whirled away as faſt as his horſes could well go, to Pine-hill. She was not in very good ſpirits, but ſhe replied to his lordſhip with much polite-

neſs on every occaſion: ſhe was only ſilent when he aſſured her of the reſpect he entertained for her; and how happy he ſhould eſteem himſelf, if her heart joined her father's good opinion of him. He would not continue this converſation as ſhe made no anſwer to any thing he ſaid; which he conceived might be occaſioned by reſerve in this firſt interview with him: he therefore changed the ſubject. Lord Cotſwold, who, though an agreeable and genteel man, was much inferior to Wills in perſonal beauty; and as he admired Juliet very much, was fearful of Wills's pretenſions being ſucceſsful: he therefore aſked Miſs Harcourt how long ſhe had known Mr. Wills. She replied, "Not long. He aſked if ſhe knew him in London. She replied, "No: he "was her ſiſter's acquaintance." His lordſhip added with a ſigh, that "he was a "good genteel young man: it was pity "that he had been ſo wild and thoughtleſs." This alarmed Juliet, and ſhe could not refrain from aſking his Lordſhip, "if he knew "Mr. Wills." "He had known a little of "him in London, where he had ſome con- "verſation about a raſcally agent, who had "defrauded him of large ſums of money,

"which he wanted him to forgive him; and "he ſuppoſed that a pretty daughter which "he had, was the occaſion of Mr. Wills's "liberality: for he heard from his attorney, "who deſcribed Mr. Wills's perſon to him, "that he was the man who had paid the "money for him, and releaſed him from "priſon; and he ſuppoſed the ſums of mo- "ney he had laviſhed upon the girl, who "was very handſome, was the occaſion of "this great alteration in his dreſs. That "he pitied him extremely, and was ſorry "he had been duped by ſo artful an huſſey, "who had ſpread her ſnares for him alſo, "which he happily eſcaped." This account ſunk deep in Juliet's mind, and ſhe ſecretly condemned herſelf for giving credit to the inſinuations of a ſtranger. How ſincerely did ſhe lament her own imprudence! Beſides, his lordſhip's account tallied and agreed with his own ſtory: and ſhe concluded, that it muſt have been for this reaſon that his aunt ſhook him off. One thing ſhe had laid down in her mind as an impoſſibility; viz. that his lordſhip ſhould deviate from truth: and Wills's ſilence in general concerning the cauſe of his aunt's diſpleaſure, confirmed her in ſuſpicions very

unfavourable to our hero: yet ſtill ſhe loved him, and wiſhed to hear what he could ſay in his own behalf upon the occaſion. To be more aſſured, ſhe aſked his lordſhip, "how long ago it was this tranſaction "happened?" His anſwer fixed the time, and Juliet was wretched. His Lordſhip added ſome circumſtances that his fertile imagination ſuggeſted, and which the credulous Juliet received as truth. Lord Cotſwold gratified two paſſions by this ſimple miſrepreſentation of facts, which he held very juſtifiable; his love, and his revenge: the former, by diſplacing a rival he had reaſon to be afraid of; and the latter, by the ſame means: for he had not forgot what Wills ſaid to him. Juliet's charms, with the addition of a large fortune, made her a very deſirable prize, and his lordſhip determined to have her: her father's approbation of the match made his acceſs to her very eaſy, and cleared the way of many difficulties. He perceived this account had diſconcerted Juliet, though ſhe endeavoured to appear quite unconcerned. He therefore took no notice of it, and chattered in the moſt eaſy and familiar manner, mingl-

ing many profeſſions of his regard for her, with his admiration of her charms.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

State of affairs at Pine-hill. An interview. A race. And a criminal apprehended.

WHEN they arrived at Pine-hill, Sir Lionel received them with much pleaſure, and introduced Lord Cotswold to her, as the man who was to be her huſband in a very ſhort time. "Where the parties "are agreed, my lord," added he, "there "is no occaſion for extraordinary delays."

WHEN Juliet retired to her chamber, after ſpending a diſagreeable evening with his Lordſhip and her father, ſhe ruminated on the adventures of the day. There was ſomething ſo odd in his Lordſhip's mentioning Wills, whom he could not ſuppoſe to have any correſpondence with her, that ſhe thought it the luckieſt thing in the world; and how to reconcile Wills's deceit with his apparent honeſty, ſhe knew not. With an aching heart ſhe went to

bed, but not to reſt; fearful of the conſequences, leſt Wills ſhould really be ſuch a man as he was deſcribed to her.

Poor Wills was not a bit eaſier. He ſat down de next day, wrote a very pathetic epiſtle to her, deſcribing his fears, and his miſery: concluding with the ſtrongeſt aſſurances of his eternal regard, and the ſincerity of his affection, As the evening approached, he ſet out for the White Hart; and, finding young Johnſon, he conjured him to contrive ſome means of conveying this letter to her, which he promiſed to do: in about an hour he returned, and delivered a note in anſwer to Wills. It contained theſe words:

"How can I regard or believe the aſ-
"ſurances of one, who has already been
"guilty of deceit? I truſted to your ho-
"nour and your honeſty: theſe being fal-
"ſified, what can I rely on? Mr. Johnſon
"will bring you to me to-morrow evening.
"I ſhall be glad to know what you can
"ſay in your own defence, or why you
"have impoſed upon the too credulous

"Juliet."

Wills almoſt ſtarted into frenzy at the peruſal of this note; but moderating his paſſion for the preſent, aſked Johnſon what Miſs Harcourt had ſaid to him. He told him that ſhe wiſhed to ſee him; and he was to bring him into the park by a private gate, where they might have an opportunity of ſeeing each other; and, that ſhe recommended ſilence and punctuality. Wills promiſed not to fail; and, as he returned, communicated the cauſe of his uneaſineſs to poor Lawſon: at the ſame time, that he gave a looſe to the diſtreſs and agony of his heart. Lawſon ſympathized with him; and conjectured, that Lord Cotſwold muſt have ſaid ſomething concerning him to her. "No, that he dared not do," ſaid Wills; "for I have ſuch damning proofs againſt "him, ſuch an opportunity of making his "villainy manifeſt, that he would not at- "tempt to rouſe me, and could any thing "tempt me to a deed of that kind, it "would be his injuring me in this tender "point, that concerns my honour and my "love."

Wills was upon thorns till the time arrived in which he was to meet Juliet; nor was he leſs unhappy, as ſhe had alſo to

fear her being discovered with him. Wills, with palpitating heart, accompanied Johnson, and left Lawson behind him at the village. When they had got safe in the park, Johnson fixed him in a particular spot, and went to acquaint Miss Harcourt. He met her, and conducting her to him, he went from them to a considerable distance, and left them to enjoy their private conversation.

Wills first began, by assuring Miss Harcourt how uneasy her note had made him: that there was not a circumstance of his life that he had not related to her, and begged her to inform him what reasons she had for supposing him guilty of deceiving or imposing on her. She very readily told him every thing that Lord Cotswold had mentioned to her, without omitting or disguising a single circumstance. "Gracious "heaven;" said Wills, when she finished, "lives there such a man! "'Tis true, my "lovely, my adorable Juliet, I know Lord "Cotswold, and we had some such con-"versation; but, if there's faith in man, "he has misrepresented things falsely and "basely. To his teeth will I tell him so,

"and cram the infamous lye down his "throat."

"RESTRAIN your paſſion, Mr. Wills; and "conſider, by doing ſo, you will diſcover "that I informed you of the tranſaction. "But cannot you unfold this myſterious af- "fair to me?"

"EXCUSE me, Miſs Harcourt; till I have made him confeſs his injuſtice to "me, I cannot."

"I am ſorry, Mr. Wills, you ſhould "think me unworthy of your confidence."

"DON'T judge ſo hardly of me: thou "art dearer to me than the blood that "throbs at my heart: and, by every ſa- "cred power, there is nothing concerning "myſelf that I would not impart you; "but, in the preſent caſe, there is the ho "nour of a young lady concerned, and I "am not at liberty to relate the ſtory. "But be aſſured that Lord Cotſwold has "deceived you."

"BY your own confeſſion, he has told "ſome truth: and why is not the ſtory to "be truſted to me?"

"Not at preſent, my charming Juliet, "till I can prove my truth and make his "Lordſhip atteſt my honour: then you "ſhall know it all, believe me. Oh, there "are a thouſand reaſons that forbid you "to learn it now."

"Indeed, Mr. Wills, there is ſome "dreadful myſtery in this; and you make "me very unhappy, by not telling me the "whole affair. I'll believe you without any "other proof."

"Oh, Juliet," ſaid he, "to what a "precipice do you drive me!"

His delicacy, and regard for Sophia Belton and her father, tied his tongue up. But his deſire to vindicate his own character, and to eaſe her of any ſuſpicions that might make her unhappy, had almoſt prevailed with him, when Juliet, fearful and apprehenſive, turned about, and ſaw ſome lights at a diſtance, and heard ſomebody calling her. "Fly," ſaid ſhe; "fly, for heaven's "ſake, or I ſhall be ruined: go ſtrait on be-"fore you." She had time to ſay no more. She had haſtened towards the lights; and he, with all his ſpeed, purſued a contrary way.

As he was totally ignorant of the ſituation of the park: and had ſtrayed with Juliet from the gate he entered at, he could not tell where to find it: and fearing to go back, leſt he ſhould be ſeen by any of the ſervants, and, for the ſame reaſon, not chuſing to call out to Johnſon, he made all the expedition he thought needful, and endeavoured to gain the wall, which he was ſure of getting over. He had not gone a great way, when he thought he heard the tread of feet; and, looking about, ſaw two men. He was very near them. "There he is," ſaid one of them; "that's he." The firſt idea that occurred to him was, that Lord Cotſwold had got intelligence of his being in the park, and had ſent theſe men to deſtroy him; for he did not imagine he would ſtop at any thing. He therefore redoubled his ſpeed, and left his purſuers, who followed him as faſt as they could, far behind. They, finding themſelves ſo much outſtript, gave a loud whiſtle, that made the woods and hills echo again. Wills without arms, if he ſtood, would have maintained an unequal combat; and eſpecially as he ſuppoſed ſome of the gang placed in another part of the park. He ſtopped and liſtened: and

heard the ſound of the feet purſuing him very diſtinctly; he therefore kept on, and ſeeing the park wall, he concluded himſelf very happy in eſcaping their fury. An eminence aſſiſted him to get on the wall, which he ſprung over with great agility, and, to his utter mortification and aſtoniſhment, found himſelf ſurrounded by four men, who ſeized on him the moment he alighted on the other ſide. "Ah ha! ma-"ſter! what, we have caught you at laſt: "you are fond of veniſon, are you? Yes, "yes, you ſhall have deer indeed! but I "believe other people will find the ſauce." Wills immediately judged that they had miſtaken his perſon, but nevertheleſs a diſcovery muſt be the conſequence, and his Juliet would be ruined. This conſideration ſtruck him ſo forcibly at that moment, that he could not forbear exclaiming: "Wretch that I am! What will become "of me?"

"Why, you'll only be hanged to be "ſure; nothing more," ſaid one of the fellows.

"Well, and where am I to go?" ſaid he,

"Why, we'll ſecure you for this night, "and carry you before a juſtice in the "morning."

They accordingly took him the road that led to Johnſon's.

Chapter XXXIV.

A preparation for the trial of two offenders. The benefit and happineſs ariſing from the ſtrict adminiſtration of juſtice. And the appearance of two perſons whom the reader has been already introduced to.

The reader will doubtleſs be curious to know, why poor Wills was thus treated; the cauſe was this. Sir Lionel had ſeveral deer taken out of his park lately, and, being very much incenſed at it, had offered a reward for apprehending the offenders. Theſe did not put a ſtop to the evil: the deer were ſtill killed, and carried away. He then doubled the reward for apprehending them, and armed his own ſervants. Wills unfortunately, when he was purſued, had directed his courſe to that part of the park wall, whe-

re the thieves had been traced, and their footſteps plainly appeared: there was a watch there, and the people in the park giving the alarm, they ſaw him coming over, and ſecured him accordingly.

MANY diſagreeable thoughts occupied Wills's imagination, as they led him in triumph to old Johnſon's. Their exultations, and the diſpute about ſharing the reward for apprehending him, gave him no pain: he only felt for what poor Juliet would ſuffer, if it ſhould come out in the courſe of the examinations, which this unlucky miſtake would produce, what brought him into the park. He could endure the inſolence of the rabble, and the diſagreeable forms he muſt go through to clear his innocence, with a great deal of patience: but his ſoul was wrung with anguiſh when he reflected on the conſequences that would fall ſo heavy on Juliet, as well from an enraged father, as the malice of a ſpiteful world.

WHEN they arrived at the village, one of the men went into Johnſon's before the reſt: "Ah maſter Johnſon, we have caught "one of the dogs at laſt."

"HAVE you?" ſaid the old man; "that's "good news indeed."

"AYE, that we have, and taken 'un in "the fact too: here, bring him in."

BUT what was his ſurpriſe when he ſaw Wills brought in, ſecured as a felon! "Oh "Lord, oh Lord, ſaid Johnſon, you have "miſtaken; this gentleman could never go "a deer-ſtealing."

"BE he what he wull, gentleman or no "gentleman, we caught him as he leaped "over the park wall, juſt by the gripe, "you know, where the t'other theives had "got over."

AT this inſtant Lawſon, alarmed by the buſtle, came to ſee what was the matter: but nothing could equal his aſtoniſhment to ſee his friend Wills in this ſituation. When he heard the matter, the firſt thing that occurred to him, was, to relieve Wills by force. He ſpoke to him in French, and imparted his ſcheme; but this Wills oppoſed, as it might be productive of much miſchief. The holding a converſation in an unknown tongue before them, alarmed the men: and one of them propoſed ſe-

curing Lawſon, who he obſerved was one of the gang, for he had been ſeen with him hovering about the houſe. It was no ſooner ſaid than done: and as they were in poſſeſſion of the doors and the houſe, it was needleſs to make reſiſtance. He demanded, what they had to alledge againſt him? and, why they ſeized him? They ſaid, "that he was a ſuſpicious perſon, and "would be obliged to give an account of "himſelf." Old Johnſon proteſted that they were uſing violence againſt two worthy gentlemen: but they would not be put off by any ſuch pretences. The hope of obtaining the reward, prevented their liſtening to any thing. When young Johnſon came in, he was as much ſurpriſed and ſhocked as any body: but the people knowing him, and finding him acquainted with the priſoners, they permitted them to go with him into the parlour, upon his promiſing for their appearance: and here a conſultation was held. Johnſon laid all the blame upon himſelf, for not being in the way to direct him where to go. Wills acquitted him of being in any fault. But what was to be done? "Theſe fellows will "carry you to juſtice Woodward's to-mor-

"row," ſaid Johnſon, "and there will be "my maſter and the lord there: and then "we ſhall be all undone."

"No," ſaid Wills, "I'll periſh before "it ſhall be known how I came into the "park: the honour of my dear Juliet is "more precious to me than my life."

"Your innocence can be proved, that's "certain," ſaid Johnſon: "but it will "be attended with a very diſagreeable diſ- "covery."

I am reſolved," ſaid Wills.

Poor Nanny, who happened to be at a neighbour's, and hearing what had happened, ran home to her father's as faſt as ſhe could, and finding that it was Wills and his friend who were apprehended, and concluding from the diſcourſe of the men, that they would certainly be hanged, for they had ſettled that point directly among themſelves, ruſhed into the room where they were ſitting, crying bitterly. Wills aſked her, what ail'd her? and telling him what ſhe had heard, he comforted and told her, there was no fear of that. He was ſtruck with her affection, and aſſured

her he would not forget it. They compoſed themſelves as well as they could; and ordering ſomething for ſupper, they contrived to get a bed in the houſe. Lawſon, ſeeing his friend extremely dejected, endeavoured to amuſe him, but in vain.

While this ſcene was carrying on, another was tranſacted at Pine hill houſe. They who had apprehended Wills, did not intend to inform Sir Lionel of the affair till the morning: but it had taken wind; and, as they were at ſupper, the butler informed Sir Lionel, that two of the deer-ſtealers had been caught in the fact; and that he heard they were to be all at juſtice Woodward's to-morrow. "Well," ſaid the knight, "I ſhall be there, and "know what they have to ſay for them-"ſelves." Juliet heard it, without imagining ſhe was ſo nearly concerned in it. The ſervant's addition had prevented her reflecting any thing about Wills. But when ſhe retired to her chamber, her maid informed her of more particulars than ſhe choſe to hear. "Law, Madam," ſaid Betty, "I hears as how they have cotched "two of the deer-ſtealers: and one of "them, John Whittle ſays, is as hand-

"ſame a properable young man as ever "you would deſire to clap your two look-"ing eyes on, and has as much the ap-"pearance of a gentleman: he was taken "getting over the wall: and the other was "caught at Gaffer Johnſon's, at the White "Hart." This intelligence was more than Juliet could ſupport. "Poor wretches," ſaid ſhe, veiling her private feelings under the appearance of general compaſſion, "what will become of them!"

"Oh, Madam, John Whittle ſays as "how they will be both hanged to be ſure, "and we've all made a bargain to go and "ſee 'em."

"That's rather inhuman," ſaid Juliet: "but how are they dreſſed, poor crea-"tures?"

"O, very ſmart, Madam, John ſays," replied Betty. "The handſome man was "dreſſed in a lightiſh coat, and his own "hair curled in his neck. I wonder if "thieves look like other people!"

"Indeed I don't know," ſaid Juliet; "but you may go, I ſhall undreſs myſelf."

In truth, the abſence of her maid was very requiſite; for her heart was full, and ſhe could not have indulged the tears, that now flowed very faſt, in Betty's preſence. What torments did the lovely maid ſuffer from this dreadful diſcovery! "I am the "cauſe of it," ſaid ſhe to herſelf. I tempt-"ed him to come into this fatal park. He "is expoſed to ignominy, to the danger "of ſuffering an horrid death, by my means. "And ſhall I not ſave him? I will, tho' "I periſh." Her reſolution was ſoon taken; and ſhe went to bed, drowned in tears at the ſad alternative which her cruel fate had reduced her to. Terrible was the agitation in her gentle boſom: between ſhame, love, pride and duty. Many a bitter ſigh eſcaped her during the ſleepleſs night: and if ſhe chanced to doze, the moſt horrid dreams were preſented to her diſturbed imagination, and ſhe was glad to awake to be relieved from them.

Lawson ſlept ſoundly: but Wills, anxious for the determination of this diſagreeable adventure, was as reſtleſs as Juliet. It ſhocked him to think, that his perfidious and hated rival ſhould behold him even a

reputed criminal: yet, hard at it was, he muſt bear it.

About eight o'clock in the morning they ſet out for the juſtice's, guarded by the people who had taken them. The noiſe of ſuch an affair had alarmed all the country, and men, women, and children, flocked out to the road, to look at them as they paſſed by. The women all declared, "they would go and ſee that pretty young "man hanged, though it was a thouſand "pities." In this manner they arrived at Mr. Juſtice Woodward's.

Sir Lionel and Lord Cotſwold were preparing to go to attend the examination of the villains, when Juliet begged to be admitted of the party; which her father, at the interceſſion of his lordſhip, granted.

The only delay at the Juſtice's was waiting for the arrival of Sir Lionel. At length he came. The juſtice went out to receive his gueſts. Miſs Juliet was ſhewn into the parlour, and Lord Cotſwold and her father went to the awful tribunal of juſtice. When his Lordſhip ſaw Wills, he preſently gueſſed it was another deſign than ſtealing deer that brought him into

the park: but if he was hanged for it, how could he help it? Poor Johnſon followed his friend and benefactor with an heavy heart. Miſs Harcourt beckoned to him and told him to inform her, as he was to attend the examination, when the priſoners were going to be ſent to jail. Sir Lionel Harcourt declared he had loſt ſeveral deer, but could not ſay the priſoners had taken them. The men who caught him getting over the wall depoſed what they knew; and the juſtice proceeded to aſk the priſoner Wills, "What he had to "ſay for himſelf?" He replied, "that he "was totally ignorant of any accuſation; "for the chief of the evidence againſt him "conſiſted in being found coming over "the wall, which he did not deny. That "he was accuſed of no poſitive crime."

"VERY true friend," ſaid the Juſtice; "but your conduct is very ſuſpicious. Pray "who are you?

"A gentleman."

"How do you live?"

"UPON my eſtate."

"WHERE does it lie, and what is the "amount of it?"

WILLS resolved him in both queſtions.

"THIS muſt be made to appear."

"So it can."

"WHERE do you generally reſide?"

"IN London.

"What brought you down here?

"Pleaſure."

"ON foot?"

"ON foot."

"How long have you been here?"

"Such a time."

"AND now, friend, what buſineſs had "you in Sir Lionel's park?"

"THAT is a queſtion I will not anſwer."

"YOU will not?"

"I am reſolved."

"THEN you muſt go to jail."

"I am ready; and ſhall willingly ſub-
"mit to be tried by my country."

"I believe you are a hardened offen-
„der, friend; ſince you don't ſeem to mind
"going to jail."

"It is the province of a magiſtrate to
"treat thoſe who labour under even the
"imputation of a crime, with lenity and
"tenderneſs; not to inſult and terrify them.
"Take care, Sir, how you treat me: there
"are laws for you as well as me."

"I mean nothing elſe but to treat you
"well: you had better therefore, confeſs
"what you wanted in the park."

"You are waſting time, Sir. I have
"already anſwered you."

"Then make out his mittimus, clerk."

At this inſtant a ſervant entered, to in-
form the juſtice that a gentleman and a
lady wanted him, who had juſt arrived in
a coach and four. He cauſed the proceed-
ings to be delayed, and he went out to
receive his gueſts. They were two perſons
whom he knew intimately well: and he
requeſted them to go into an apartment

till he had diſpatched ſome buſineſs then in hand.

This gentleman and lady were no other than Sophia Belton and her father, who, having ſucceeded to the fortune of the relation who ſent for them, as before taken notice of, were then come to ſettle with Mr. Woodward about ſome money affairs. Their virtues, and their melancholy ſtory, rendered them ſo worthy in the eyes of their relation, that ſhe left them every thing ſhe had in the world, and Sophy was now miſtreſs of a conſiderable independent fortune.

Chapter XXXV.

A joyful meeting: an eclairciſſement: the tables turned: and an expreſs: all contained in one chapter.

As the door of the audience-chamber was open when they paſſed by, Sophy ſaw Wills: and when the juſtice attended them into the room, ſhe told her father that ſhe was ſure Mr. Wills was there.

"You muſt be miſtaken, my dear," ſaid he.

"No," ſaid the juſtice; "there is a "young man of the name Wills, brought "before me for a capital offence."

"Good heaven!" ſaid Belton; "my "friend, my protector, my ſaviour. Oh! "let me fly, and claſp him in my arms."

Oh! Sir," ſaid Sophy to the juſtice, her eyes ſwimming in tears, "he is the beſt, "the worthieſt man in the world. I'll go "with you, father."

"No," ſaid the juſtice: "I'll bring "him to you: this is ſomewhat extraor- "dinary!"

He went accordingly to Wills, and told him to follow him: that a gentleman wanted to ſee him on the moſt earneſt buſineſs.

"Me! ſee me!" ſaid Wills; "I'll fol- "low you, Sir."

He led him to the appartment where Belton and his daughter were. They flew to his arms: and loaded him with careſſes and praiſes. He embraced them both

with the greateſt joy. He told them his time was not his own then, when they would have detained him: "But," ſaid he, recollecting himſelf, "your coming here is "moſt fortunate. Sure providence intereſts "itſelf to witneſs my integrity; Let me "entreat you to remain here, and not be "ſeen till I ſend for you. — Now, Sir," addreſſing himſelf to the juſtice, "I beg "you will reconduct me to the place when-"ce I came."

The juſtice now was more complaiſant to him, and bid him not be uneaſy, for matters would be ſettled. Juſt as they had got into the hall of audience, they heard a loud cry of, "Help, help for God's "ſake!" Wills ſprung to the place from whence the ſound came, and ſaw his adorable Juliet fainting in Johnſon's arms. His ſoul was froze at the ſight for a moment; and then the ſituation of his beloved, taught him what to do: he claſped her in his arms, and recalled her to life by the gentle voice of love. By this time the company had gathered into the parlour, and Sir Lionel and Lord Cotſwold were ſtruck dumb at the ſight. The appearance of her father rouſed Juliet. She

deſired the room might be cleared of every body, except the Juſtice, her father, Lord Cotſwold, Johnſon, and Wills and Lawſon. It was inſtantly done: and Juliet, throwing herſelf at her father's feet, told him, "That ſhe would unravel this whole "affair, and tho' ſhe ſhould meet with "his ſevereſt anger, yet ſhe muſt ſave an "innocent man." She then begun, by acquainting him with her firſt knowledge of Wills; and proceeded ſtep by ſtep, and even told the cauſe why ſhe had ſent for him into the park, adding, "as ſhe was "the ſole cauſe, ſhe only ſhould bear the "blame."

"My deareſt child," ſaid Sir Lionel, "why did not you acquaint me with this "before.

"Sir," ſaid he, turning to Wills, "I "thank you, for being the deliverer of "my darling child, and entreat you to ex"cuſe the trouble this miſtake has occa"ſioned you. I will endeavour to make "you and your friend ſome amends."

"Sir, it is forgotten and forgiven," ſaid Wills: "but I have another account to "ſettle here, and that is with you, my

"Lord. You have heard what that young "Lady has publickly declared you told her "concerning me. I am now, my Lord, "in condition to vindicate my own honour, "and return your taunts with intereſt. Is "it true you ſaid ſo?"

"Sir," replied his Lordſhip, "I ſhall "not contradict what that Lady ſays; nay, "more, the fact is true."

"Base Lord! the puniſhment of thy "crimes is at hand, and ſhame awaits thee. "Mr. Woodward, ſhall I entreat you to "ſend for the ſtranger in the other room?"

He obeyed.

"Sir," ſaid his Lordſhip, "I ſhall find "a time to repay this inſolence."

"You ſhall never want an opportunity, "my Lord."

As he ſpoke the door opened, and Sophia Belton approaching firſt, followed by her father, no ſooner ſaw Lord Cotſwold, than, giving a loud ſhriek, ſhe fainted away. Her father left her in the arms of Mr. Woodward. Juliet ran to her aſſiſtance, and ſoon recovered her. Belton's

honeſt indignation was not to be repreſſed: he ſprung forward, and accoſted his Lordſhip, who ſtood almoſt petrified with ſurprize and ſhame. "Do you know me, "my Lord? Can you look upon the man "whoſe life you determined to ſacrifice, "becauſe he would not ſurrender up his "daughter's honour to your libidinous ap"petites? and nearly had you effected it, "if this young man, like our guardian "angel, had not ſtepped between us and "deſtruction. He preſerved my life; and "my child is ſtill pure and virtuous. And "ſo far has he been from endeavouring to "acquire any merit from this action, that "I have in vain endeavoured to find him "out to repay him the money he expend"ed to relieve me from jail, where I was "thrown, out of revenge, by you."

He ceaſed. Wills led Miſs Belton towards Miſs Harcourt. "This is the Lady, "Madam, whom Lord Cotſwold has told "you of: She is preſent, and can anſwer "any thing he chuſes to ſay concerning "her." My Lord remained ſilent. Belton once more threw his arms about Wills: "Let me no more part from you, my friend,

"my ſon: live with me: I have now for-
"tune enough. Thanks, thanks, my friend."

THE ſcene began to grow too affecting: the old gentleman's gratitude brought tears into his eyes, and choaked his utterance. Every body was moved. "This young man," ſaid Sir Lionel, "muſt have been "very worthy: ſure it is a pleaſure to be "thus beloved!" Johnſon, who could not tell how to ſtand this ſcene, had retired to the door, to wipe his eyes in private: ſo heartily did he rejoice at Wills's releaſe, and his being able to clear up his character in ſuch a manner. He had ſtrolled into the road. A man on horſeback ſtopped: "Is this the road to Pinchill?"

"WHAT do you want there?" ſaid Johnſon.

"I am told a ſquire Wills is there; I am come expreſs to him."

"HE's here, he's here, ſaid Johnſon: "come in." The man alighted, and Johnſon ruſhed into the parlour with the expreſs following him, who delivered a packet into Wills's hand. He begged the excuſe of the company, and opening it, found it

was ſent by Mr. Jefferſon, whom our reader, whithout doubt, remembers. Encloſed was a note from his aunt.

My dear child,

If you have a deſire to ſee me, haſten hither: I am going to my long home. Come to me then, and let me aſk your forgiveneſs before I die.

Thy affectionate aunt,

Pris. Kingley.

"My forgiveneſs! Gracious God!" exclaimed Wills: "let me fly, and pay my "laſt duty to my benefactreſs, my mother, "my every thing." Johnſon was deſired to order a chaiſe to go poſt, and he explained the meaning of his ſurpriſe. The juſtice requeſted he would take ſome refreſhment before he went off, which he conſented to; but aſked leave of Sir Lionel to viſit him at Pine-hill on his return. The baronet anſwered: "he ſhould be glad "to ſee him." The chaiſe was ſoon ready, but Lawſon refuſed to go with him, for reaſons that ſhall be hereafter explained. Wills took his leave of the company, and went, as faſt as the horſes could carry

him, to London. The juſtice inſiſted upon their dining with him; which they all agreed to, except Lord Cotſwold, whoſe carriage came and took him away, loaded with the contempt and hatred of the whole company.

After the dinner was over, Sir Lionel begged to know the truth of the ſtory that had been ſo much miſrepreſented to Juliet. Belton anſwered him. Sir, I am "not aſhamed to have my wants known, "or the miſeries I have ſuffered made pub-"lic, if I can be of any ſervice to Mr. "Wills. Sophy, I beg you will inform "this company of the whole tranſaction." She obeyed; and as far as ſhe knew, delivered the artleſs tale. Lawſon cloſed it. He told the whole fund he poſſeſſed that he was generous from; related Lord Cotſwold's behaviour to him, and the fatal conſequences of his liberality with his aunt, who, he hoped, upon her death-bed would have ſome more pity for him, than ſhe had lately ſhown. He alſo related the different adventures on the road, in order to ſhew the goodneſs of his friend's heart.

The gueſts gave various opinions, as

inclination led them, upon the different parts of his ſtory. They all joined, however, in his praiſe. Belton, finding Lawſon ſo intimate a friend of Wills's, invited him to go home with him, which he complied with, not without an invitation to go to Pine-hill, where he alſo promiſed to pay his reſpects to Sir Lionel and the fair Juliet.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

A retroſpect. Mac Gregor's hiſtory. A melancholy ſcene.

WHILE Wills is travelling to London, it is neceſſary, in the mean time, to inform our readers of the great change in affairs, that cauſed his aunt to call him to her preſence.

As ſoon as Mac Gregor had ſo ſucceſsfully expelled Wills from his aunt's houſe, all his endeavour was, to eſtabliſh himſelf in his place. It cannot be denied, but he was very agreeable to Miſs Kingley: his prudence, his œconomy, his frugality, or, t h er, parſimony, endeared him very much

to her. She began to liſten to his vows of regard for her with pleaſure; but there was one thing that prevented her meeting his paſſion; and that was no other than a want of fortune on his ſide. Miſs Kingley procraſtinated matters as if ſhe had been but fifteen; and all the captain's ardour could not make her determine to take that ſtep, which would fix his eternal happineſs. He had as many reaſons for wiſhing to expedite the affair, as ſhe had for delaying it. In this dubious ſtate matters remained for a long time; though all the neighbourhood, with their accuſtomed ſagacity, had made the match up long before. Mr. Jefferſon the curate, who had a great regard for poor Wills, frequently endeavoured to introduce a converſation about him, and find out, if poſſible, the cauſe of his exile from his aunt's houſe. But this ſhe always carefully avoided; giving it out, he was ſo bad, that there was no poſſibility of reclaiming him; and that ſhe was therefore obliged to diſcard him. Mac Gregor, whenever he happened to be preſent, never failed to hint, that the extravagance of youth was of the moſt pernicious conſequence; and ever added ſome

dreadful example of it. Jefferſon obſerved this enflamed Miſs Kingley's rage eternally; and her paſſion and anger againſt her nephew were ſtill kept alive by theſe inſinuations. He therefore concluded there was ſome foul play going forward, as it was Mac Gregor's intereſt to keep the nephew off; but he was ſo deeply fixed in Miſs Kingley's good graces, that it would be rather a difficult matter to ſhake him.

CHANCE determined the whole affair. It might, with greater propriety, be ſtiled the finger of a wiſe and unerring providence. Jefferſon was called out one morning to attend a poor woman, who, it was apprehended, was near her end, and deſired to have a clergyman. He accordingly went. He found an elderly woman who appeared very ill, and had the remains of gentility about her, and in her manner, tho' her dreſs was plain and mean. When they were left by themſelves, he demanded of her if ſhe had any thing particular to ſay to him. She replied that ſhe had not, but was a woman who was ruined by her own folly and credulity, and the inſinuations of the moſt artful villain in the world.

Jefferſon aſked her name. "My name was "Tulford, but I unhappily changed it for "Mac Gregor."

"THAT it your huſband's name, I pre-"ſume, Madam?"

"IT is, Sir: I wiſh I had never ſeen "him."

JEFFERSON aſked her many queſtions, and found that her huſband was the individual Captain Mac Gregor who was laying ſuch cloſe ſiege to Miſs Kingley. He, therefore, requeſted her to inform him, how ſhe got acquainted with him: which ſhe did, and related her whole ſtory to him. Jefferſon was aſtoniſhed; but imagining this might prove ſerviceable to his young friend, bade her endeavour to keep her ſpirits up; aſked if ſhe wanted any thing; and left ſome money with the woman of the houſe where ſhe was, to provide her with neceſſaries: promiſing to call on her again, and bring ſome good ladies in the neighbourhood with him, who would contribute to relieve her from her preſent neceſſities. The poor gentlewoman thanked him; and he poſted home as faſt as he could, to tell his wife what had happened, deſiring

her, as ſhe ſtill had great ſway with Miſs Kingley, to go to her, and inform her in part of this matter, and to perſuade her to accompany them that evening to ſee Mrs. Mac Gregor. Mrs. Jefferſon, who had not loſt her fondneſs for communicating intelligence, hurried to Miſs Kingley; and ſo well did ſhe relate and embelliſh ſuch part of the ſtory which her huſband had entruſted her with, that ſhe eaſily perſuaded Miſs Kingley to go along with them in the afternoon. She accordingly called on them in her coach, and they all went to the houſe where the ſick woman was. Jefferſon found her much better than in the morning, and then introduced his wife and Miſs Kingley. They had brought ſome cordials, and other things, proper for her, which they very obligingly preſented to her: and after ſhe had recovered a little, Jefferſon requeſted the favour of her to repeat the ſtory ſhe had related to him that day, as it would much oblige thoſe Ladies. She began as follows:

"My knowledge of Captain Mac Gre-"gor, as he called himſelf, tho', in reali-"ty, he was but an enſign, began about "four years ago; and I was then unhap-

"pily unacquainted with his character, "which I have ſince, but too late for my "peace, learned. It is needleſs to men- "tion the place of his birth. He has all "the frugal maxims, ſo particularly adopt- "ed by all the lower claſs of the people "of that kingdom, ready at his fingers "ends. By the intereſt of ſome friend, he "got a pair of colours in one of the new- "raiſed regiments. Here, while other "young men could hardly ſubſiſt upon their "pay, he was making money of it. From "a conſtant attention to the weakneſs and "failings of his brother officers, he rend- "ered himſelf neceſſary, and agreeable "to them all. He praiſed and flattered "the vain glorious; he aſſiſted the lewd "in their amours; and, to the prodigal, "he lent ſmall ſums of money, which he "exacted exorbitant intereſt for. His cool- "neſs and his avarice made him a gameſter: "and the command he had over his tem- "per, eternally gave him the ſuperiority "over the raſh and impetuous; an advan- "tage he never failed to make the moſt "of. An affair he had with a ſerjeant's "wife, obliged him to refund ſome part of "his ill-gotten property, to ſave himſelf

from a proſecution that would not have "been very pleaſing to him; and his miſbe-"haviour with a gentleman who called him "into the field, ſo much diſguſted the offi-"cers, that they refuſed to roll with him, "and he was obliged to ſell out. How-"ever, as the matter was liable to many "miſrepreſentations, and he had very art-"fully confuſed it ſo, that the truth could "not eaſily be come at, his character was "not looked upon as notorious. He there-"fore came to London: and as the ſaving "avaricious villain, with a few frugal and "honeſt ſentiments in his mouth, which cor-"reſpond with his apparent manner of living, "ſhall be honoured, applauded, and court-"ed, where the generous and open-ſpirited "man is deſpiſed and ſhunned, he found his "end anſwered; but he had not any great "opportunity of putting his arts in practice "till he met me. I was a widow, and ra-"ther advanced in years, when a young "man, whoſe name was Davis, an half-pay "officer, paid his addreſſes to me. I can't "ſay but I was pleaſed with, and had con-"ſented to be married to him. And here I "cannot help reflecting upon my own fool-"iſhneſs, to imagine that I ſhould be able

"to attach a young man to myſelf, who was "then old; and never conſidered that it was "my fortune, and not me, he married: and "at that time I was worth above five thou- "ſand pounds. Davis, who I really believe "was a worthy young man, was a little "wild; and tho' he might want part of my "fortune to clear himſelf in the world, yet I "believe he would have had generoſity and "gratitude enough to treat me well. The "day was fixed that was to have made me "his wife: and the day before that he had "appointed to meet me to ſettle matters. I "then lived in Eſſex, a little way from Lon- "don. The greater part of the day paſſed "away, and I was much ſurprized at never "hearing from him. About the evening this "Captain Mac Gregor came to me from his "friend, with an apology for his abſence. "The friend of the man who was to be my "huſband, I could not refuſe to ſhew every "civility to. He delivered the excuſe he was "to make for his ſtaying away with a very "good grace: and told me how very unhap- "py his friend was upon that account. I ex- "preſſed my uneaſineſs at it, and begged to "know the cauſe. He replied, it was ſome "buſineſs that muſt be ſettled. In our con-

"verſation, in which he artfully mingled "many hints of his own prudence and œco- "nomy, happening to ſay, I imagined Mr. "Davis was a little wild, he replied in ſuch a "manner as alarmed my ſuſpicions; and beg- "ging him to tell me if he knew any thing "concerning him, he at firſt heſitated, and "at laſt declared that he could not, on any "account, be concerned in ſuch an affair, "without letting me know the truth of the "matter. That though Davis was his friend, "he would not be acceſſory to ſuch a piece "of treachery as ſuffering me to fall into his "hands, whom he deſcribed as a gambler, a "man of infinite extravagance and expence; "dropped ſome hints as if he had been alrea- "dy married, and that he was over head and "ears in debt: and to ſhew the regard he had "for me, offered to give me the moſt con- "vincing proofs of his being at that inſtant in "a ſpunging-houſe, and, conſequently, if I "married him, my fortune would become a "prey to his creditors. This ſtory, artfully "told, ſunk deep in my heart. I was enrag- "ed at the villain, as I then thought him. "The next day was to be that of my nuptials. "Mac Gregor told me that it would be the "beſt proof in the world of the truth of his

"ſtory, if Davis did not come punctually to "his time. I agreed with him. The next "morning early Mac Gregor came to me, and "no Davis appeared. What ſhall I ſay for "myſelf? Irritated at the perfidy of Davis, "and deluded by the apparent honeſty of Mac "Gregor, I became his wife that day, and "in an evil hour for me. He did not treat "me long even with complaiſance. He ſeiz-"ed on my fortune, which I had not pru-"dence enough to keep in my own power. "He removed me to a great diſtance from "the metropolis and my friends; and ſoon "after ſtripped me of every thing I had, and "left me in the extremeſt poverty. Indeed I "might have imagined ſome ſuch thing would "have happened from his ill treatment of me. "Abuſe and blows I met with daily from "him; and, as I learned, ſoon after I was "married, thoſe particulars of him which I "have related previous to my knowledge of "him, I had every thing to fear. I alſo "found that he had been the means of hav-"ing Davis arreſted, in order to keep him "away from me, that he might get me him-"ſelf. His ſcheme was but too ſucceſsful. "After enduring much miſery and want, I "made a ſhift to get thus far, in hopes of

"meeting him in London, and obtaining ſo-
"me redreſs. My relations and friends, who
"hoped to poſſeſs my fortune, are ſo exaſpe-
"rated againſt me, that they refuſe to aſſiſt
"me. This is all I have to ſay: and ſeverely
"have I ſuffered from my own imprudence."

Miss Kingley could hardly ſupport herſelf during this narration: but informing herſelf where they were married, and leaving Mrs. Mac Gregor with a promiſe of ſeeing her the next day; ſhe deſired Mr. Jefferſon would go poſt to this place, as it was not far off, and let her know whether it was true or no. For as ſhe expected to ſee Mac Gregor the next day ſhe would clear up this matter. In the mean time, ſhe ſent an apothecary to the ſick woman. Jefferſon, who prudently conjectured that an elucidation of this affair would be of the greateſt utility to Wills, determined to ſtrike the iron while it was hot; and ſet out that very evening. The next morning he returned with a proper authentication of the marriage of Alexander Mac Gregor with Elizabeth Tulford. Miſs Kingley turned pale at the ſight of it. "Oh, Mr. "Jefferſon, what have I eſcaped," ſaid ſhe. "The villain! what evils too have I made "my poor Frank ſuffer! But I ſee that fellow

"coming. I will diſguiſe my reſentment: "'tis the only way I have to put myſelf on a "footing with him, to be as great an hypo- "crite as himſelf. I ſhall beg the favour of "you to accompany us to ſee his wife. We "will alſo call on Mrs. Jefferſon."

Mac Gregor, ignorant of the blow that was preparing for him, entered Miſs Kingley's with a ſmile on his countenance; and ſhaking his good friend Jefferſon, as he called him, by the hand, aſked, "Where the "gude lady of the manſion was?" The other replied, ſhe was above ſtairs, dreſſing herſelf. In a few minutes ſhe came down, and expreſſing her joy to ſee the captain, ſaid, he had come in good time to attend them on a party that they had made. "He was very "happy:" and the coach being come to the door, they all ſet out together, calling by the way on Mrs. Jefferſon, whom they took up. She went firſt up ſtairs, and deſired Mrs. Mac Gregor to prepare herſelf for the ſight of her huſband: at the ſame time requeſting her to ſtep into a cloſet that was in the room. The reſt of the company followed her up as ſoon they thought ſhe had ſettled matters properly. Jefferſon, who entered the room laſt, ſtood againſt the door:

and Miſs Kingley who went in before the captain, as ſoon as ſhe thought him fixed, aſked Mrs. Jefferſon, "how ſhe found Mrs, "Mac Gregor this evening?"

"SHE is better, Madam: pray ſtep in." And opening the cloſet door, the captain's wife entered.

THIS was a ſtroke he could not guard againſt; but he reſolved to parry it as well as he hould, and appeared very careleſs, though he was half mad at the diſappointment and diſcovery. He took no notice of her at the firſt. They ſtood ſilent ſome moments: at laſt ſhe addreſſed him. "I ſup-"poſe, Mr. Mac Gregor, you are very much "ſurprized to find me here."

"For what, Madam, ſhould I be ſur-"prized at the ſight of a perſon I have not "the honour of knowing?"

"NOT know me, Sir! but I can prove "myſelf your wife; and will do it."

"THAT is an impoſſibility," ſaid the intrepid captain.

"No, Sir; I believe that I ſhall be able "to do it," ſaid Miſs Kingley. Then taking

the certificate from her pocket, ſhe ſhewed it to him, and aſked him if he remembered ſuch a tranſaction. He acknowledged ſuch a thing had once happened; and that the wife, mentioned there, was dead.

"No, Sir," ſaid Jefferſon interpoſing, "this is the lady, and we ſhall find a means "of proving her identity."

"She's a vile impoſtor." ſaid Mac Gregor, grinning with rage.

"Well, Sir," ſaid Miſs Kingley, "then "we will have her puniſhed: and as you "can prove without doubt where your wife "died, I ſhall take this woman home with "me, and keep her ſafe, that ſhe may not "eſcape: and as ſoon as you prove her a "cheat, I will be yours, my worthy cap-"tain. Prepare yourſelf, Madam, to go "along with me in the coach; the innocent "captain will accompany us. And I ſhall "always be glad to ſee you, dear Sir."

This ſpeech, delivered with a ſneer, quite diſconcerted the captain. He raved, he ſwore, he threatened; wkich but the more convinced them of his guilt. They went down ſtairs together. Miſs Kingley put Mrs.

Mac Gregor into the coach, and aſked the captain to follow her. "No," ſaid he; "perdition ſeize you all together! You "ſhould have ſhared the ſame fate of that old fool, if I could have got you once "into my hands: but you have eſcaped me. "Damnation —!"

He ſaid no more, but marched off to London as faſt as he could, and never was ſeen in England after.

Miss Kingley had reaſon to thank heaven for her eſcape; ſhe conſoled Mrs. Mac Gregor, and aſſured her ſhe would give her an annuity for her life; and if ſhe choſe to live with her, ſhe might while ſhe lived. Mrs. Mac Gregor complied. "And now," ſaid Miſs Kingley, "I ſhall have an hourly me- "morandum of my folly before my eyes. "But perhaps my dear boy, my poor Frank, "is ſuffering in indigence and neceſſity, from "my folly in liſtening to that villain's inſi- "nuations. My dear Mr. Jefferſon, I muſt "once more be troubleſome to you, to en- "deavour to find him out. I ſhall never be "eaſy till I ſee him, and aſk his forgiveneſs "for the evils that I have occaſioned him."

"I never undertook a taſk with greater "pleaſure, Madam. I believe he was ſadly "miſrepreſented to you. I ſhall ſet about "it directly."

He did ſo: but his ſearch was in vain.

Miss Kingley, whoſe natural affection for her nephew was always very great, though froze for a while by the hand of avarice, and the inſinuation of Mac Gregor, now thawed apace, and her whole heart was deluged with the returning ſtream. She conceived that her nephew was gone abroad, and that he was ruined, or perhaps diſtracted, by her unkindneſs. She fell ill. Jefferſon renewed his ſearch, and acquainting the people where he lodged, and at the coffee-houſe he uſed to frequent, with the bad conſequence that might attend their concealment of him, they directed him at laſt where he might be found, which he had ordered to be kept a great ſecret. The expreſs which the reader has already heard that Wills received, was then ſent off, and Jefferſon returned to inform Miſs Kingley of his ſucceſs. She ſtill grew worſe. Her uneaſineſs at her treatment of him, the reflection of her being thus impoſed on, preyed upon her ſpirits, and reduced her very low: but for fear ſhe

ſhould be ſnatched away before ſhe could do her nephew juſtice, ſhe ſent for a notary, and, in proper form, bequeathed every thing ſhe had in the world to him; making him ſole executor. She grew worſe and the phyſicians delivered it as their opinions, ſhe could not live another day. Mr. Jefferſon conſtantly attended her, and all ſhe had to lament in this world was, her not ſeeing her dear Frank. At that inſtant he arrived; for he had not delayed a moment to take any reſt by the way. When he heard how dangerouſly ill his aunt was, every trace of her ill treatment was obliterated, and nothing remained in his remembrance, but her fondneſs, her generoſity, and her tenderneſs to him during his life. As ſoon as ſhe heard he was come, ſhe ſent for him. He approached the bed where ſhe lay, choaked with ſorrow. "Oh! my child," ſaid the expiring aunt, "I "ſhall now die contented to have ſeen you. "But you muſt forgive me, indeed you muſt, "for treating you ſo cruelly."

"Oh! Madam," ſaid he, throwing himſelf on his knees by her bed ſide, ſeizing her hand which ſhe held towards him, and bathing it with his tears, "talk not thus,

"It is I who have offended you; let me "have the happineſs to hear you pardon me."

"I do, I do, Frank; from my ſoul I do: "but though I have uſed you ill when I was "impoſed on, I have done you all the juſtice "I could. Indeed, my dear child, the re- "membrance of it lies cloſe, very cloſe to "my heart."

"FORGET it, forget it, my ever-dear, my "much-revered parent," ſaid the affectionate Wills, diſſolved with tenderneſs and affliction. "You never wronged or injured me."

"LET that reſt, Frank; you are maſter "of all our fortune, which has been encreaſ- "ed rather than diminiſhed in my hands. I "have nothing to recommend to you, but to "give Mrs. Mac Gregor fifty pounds a year "while ſhe lives; why, Mr. Jefferſon will "tell you, who has been your very good "friend: take care of him."

HER ſpeech failed her, and Wills thought ſhe was gone. He called for help, and ſhe recovered again. He ſat by her. He kept his hand in hers, and ſhe juſt recovered her ſpeech to bid him farewell. Recommending her ſpirit into the hands of him who gave it,

and fixing her dying eyes upon her beloved nephew, ſhe expired without a groan.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

A trip Pine-hill. *The Hiſtory and chapter concluded by two engagements.*

WILLS, who really loved his aunt, was much afflicted at her death. He conferred with Jefferſon concerning Mrs. Mac Gregor, who informed him of the villany of the Captain. He could ſcarcely believe it. However, he obeyed his aunt's deſire, though ſhe did not live a great while to benefit by it. He buried his aunt along with her two ſiſters, with great ſolemnity and pomp; and, inſpecting her papers, found himſelf maſter of a landed eſtate of about ſix hundred pounds a year, and, in mortgages and ſecurities for money, to the value of near eighty five thouſand pounds more; a diſtant relation having left her near twenty thouſand pounds, when ſhe did not want it. This circumſtance Wills knew nothing of, till after her death. And now he prepared to viſit his adorable Juliet, whom, nothing but his affection for his aunt,

could have made him forget for a moment. He, therefore, as ſoon as he had put himſelf and ſervants in mourning, ſet out poſt for Pine-hill, taking ſome cloaths, &c. for Lawſon, who, as he ſuppoſed, ſtood in want of them. But we think it neceſſary, both for our reader and ourſelf, being much more expeditiouſly conveyed than Wills, to ſtep before him to Pine-hill, and ſee what has been doing in his abſence. We promiſed alſo to inform our ſaid reader, what was the reaſon why Lawſon would not accompany Wills to London: and this was not occaſioned by any want of friendſhip in him, but becauſe he thought he ſhould employ his time much better in talking to Sophia Belton, with whom he was much ſmitten.

Sir Lionel Harcourt had given Mr. and Miſs Belton an invitation to come to Pine-hill: and the two young ladies ſoon became intimate. Sir Lionel Harcourt, whoſe character we have already delineated, grew, on a ſudden, the reverſe of what he had been: he became generous and affable. He preſerved his dignity, but did it without that offenſive pride and haughtineſs that ſerved only to diſguſt every body that came near him. As this is one of thoſe changes that ſhould be properly

accounted for to make it probable, we ſhall endeavour to aſſign ſome reaſons for it. Sir Lionel, who had always regarded the acquiſition of wealth as a means of making himſelf beloved, had, from an unequal diſtribution of the gifts of fortune in his favour, attached himſelf to that maxim. For ſeveral years he adhered cloſely to it, but it did not anſwer his end. The ſeverity of his temper, and the diſtance he kept the reſt of mankind at, produced fear and diſtruſt. He did not want ſenſe: he had alſo applied himſelf lately very cloſely to reading, and had conſequently improved it: but he could not change his manners confirmed by time. The ſcene with Wills at the juſtice's ſhewed him the path he ſhould have followed. "This young man," ſaid he, "with ſo trifling a fortune, has done "much good, and rendered himſelf beloved "by every body. He feels for diſtreſs, and "relieves it. He muſt have more pleaſure "in doing ſo, than I have had in the accu"mulation of riches. I am not aſhamed to "be taught." Lord Cotſwold's character alſo appeared to him in a ſhocking light: and he ſecretly rejoiced at his daughter's having eſcaped an union with a man of his principles. He therefore began to practiſe the re-

verſe of the conduct he had heretofore purſued: he ſucceeded to his wiſh; and found joy and affection in every eye that uſed to look on him with fear and hatred:

LAWSON, who, as Wills's friend, was well received at Mr. Belton's at firſt, was now careſſed on his own account, and drank large draughts of love from Sophia's eyes. He was not diſagreeable to her. 'Tis true, if ſhe had not known that Wills's heart was engaged, ſhe would have been more happy with him; but Lawſon, on that account, was ſoon on a very good footing with her.

WHEN Wills arrived at Pine-hill, Sir Lionel received him with great affection: and having already learned from his daughter's mouth, that he was her deliverer; he told him that he muſt be indebted to him to take care of her, ſince he had ſaved her life. Wills thanked him with great joy, and acquainting him of the ſituation of his fortune, Sir Lionel congratulated him on it, and told him he would ſend Juliet to wiſh him joy alſo. She came blooming like the morning, and, bluſhing as ſhe ſpoke, welcomed him to Pine-hill. Wills ſnatched her to his enraptured arms, and enjoyed the bleſſing of a willing

embrace. And here, reader, if thou wert ever in love, and met the admired object, full of tenderneſs, joy, and mutual love, thou mayeſt form ſome idea of the rapturous interview of this virtuous, this lovely pair. We confeſs our powers to be totally inadequate to the deſcription of it, and therefore we ſhall not attempt it. Wills, however, was happy to his utmoſt wiſhes, in the ſight and affection of his beloved Juliet. He preſented her with a very coſtly and elegant ſet of Jewels he had purchaſed, and which ſhe received as a mark of his eſteem for her. Sir Lionel commended his taſte and gallantry, when his dear child ſhewed them to him; her eyes ſparkling with pleaſure and tranſport, while ſhe diſplayed that trophy of her charms, and preſented by his hand. In a few days Mr. and Miſs Belton, and Lawſon, came to Pine-hill: they were a family of harmony and love, and nothing was talked of but the approaching ceremony that was to complete their felicity.

In the mean time, Lord Cotſwold bore very indignantly the triumph of Wills at the juſtice's: and hearing of this change in his fortune, and the preparations they were making at Pine-hill for his nuptials with his quon-

dam miſtreſs, determined to call him to an account for the liberties he had taken with him. He accordingly ſent a gentleman, a friend of his, to Pine-hill, with a meſſage to Mr. Wills, naming the day and place where he expected to meet him with a friend. Wills promiſed to be punctual; and informing Lawſon of the matter, they ſet out very early the next morning, and found his Lordſhip ready. Wills aſked him, "what was "the cauſe of this meſſage?" He replied, "his extraordinary inſolence, and his pretend-"ing to Miſs Harcourt."

"Nay," ſaid Wills, "it is your inſolence "ſhould be puniſhed: and as for Miſs Har-"court, he muſt kill me, who poſſeſſes her. "Not to loſe my life in aſſerting my right to "her, would ſpeak me baſe indeed."

They both drew; the ſeconds interpoſed, and wiſhed ſome mode of reconciliation might be found out. Lord Cotſwold ſaid, "there could be none deviſed, that would "waſh away the ſtain of infamy that Mr. Wills "had caſt upon him, but his blood." Wills then deſired Lawſon to ſtand aſide, and they engaged. Fortune was at the beginning pretty equal. Wills received the firſt wound. The

ſword paſſed under his arm, and ſcratched him, but ſlightly: but his Lordſhip, not having recovered ſoon enough from his lunge to guard againſt his antagoniſt's agility, he got within his guard, and diſarmed him. "You "are born to triumph over me," ſaid Lord Cotſwold; "and I muſt yield to you perfor-"ce. I won't remain here a witneſs of your "happineſs obtained at my expence." He quitted the field, and left the kingdom ſoon after. Wills got his wound dreſſed. Being very ſmall, it was ſoon healed; and he hoped the affair would not be made known. As they were returning, Lawſon acquainted him with the ſituation of his heart: and his friend promiſed to do every thing he could for him.

As neither Wills nor Lawſon could be found in the morning, it gave great uneaſineſs to the family at Pine-hill. The women knew not what was the cauſe of it: and both Juliet and Sophy were very unhappy, and communicated their fears to each other. However, Sir Lionel compoſed them a little, by ſaying, "he was ſure they were gone "upon ſome frolic, and intended to ſurprize "the girls on their return." But to Belton he could not help owning, that he was as uneaſy as they were. He was not a little pleaſ-

ed to ſee them return: and preſſing Wills very home concerning his morning expedition, he learned the truth with much difficulty from him, which he entreated him to conceal from Juliet. However, the ſervants, having ſeen Lord Cotſwold's carriage driving in a hurry from the field, mentioned it at home, and it came to Juliet's ears; who, gueſſing what had happened, gently chid her lover for expoſing his life to danger, which was ſo dear to her. Wills calmed her fears by promiſing never to offend again. He did not let his friend's affair cool: but recommended Lawſon ſtrongly to Mr. Belton: and Sophy not oppoſing, they determined to be made happy on the ſame day.

It came at laſt, and the two friends were ſupremely bleſſed. Nor was the joy on this occaſion confined to them alone: the whole country partook of it. The fathers grew young again in the proſpect of the happineſs of their dear children. Wills, poſſeſſed of every thing the heart of man can wiſh for, ſhews his gratitude, by endeavouring to make every body happy about him. In this taſk he is aſſiſted by his lovely partner, who begins to grow too unwieldy to take much exerciſe.

The reward of guilt is miſery: The tenaciouſneſs of avarice brings its own puniſhment: The violation of truth is followed by ſhame and remorſe; and a life of iniquity is terminated in woe. But peace and honour ſhall attend on him, whoſe honeſt and upright heart, conſcious of its integrity actuated by a principle of univerſal benevolence, feels and relie-

ſword paſſed under his arm, and ſcratched him, but ſlightly: but his Lordſhip, not having recovered ſoon enough from his lunge to guard againſt his antagoniſt's agility, he got within his guard, and diſarmed him. "You "are born to triumph over me," ſaid Lord Cotſwold; "and I muſt yield to you perfor-"ce. I won't remain here a witneſs of your "happineſs obtained at my expence." He quitted the field, and left the kingdom ſoon after. Wills got his wound dreſſed. Being very ſmall, it was ſoon healed; and he hoped the affair would not be made known. As they were returning, Lawſon acquainted him with the ſituation of his heart: and his friend promiſed to do every thing he could for him.

As neither Wills nor Lawſon could be found in the morning, it gave great uneaſineſs to the family at Pine-hill. The women knew not what was the cauſe of it: and both Juliet and Sophy were very unhappy, and communicated their fears to each other. However, Sir Lionel compoſed them a little, by ſaying, "he was ſure they were gone "upon ſome frolic, and intended to ſurprize "the girls on their return." But to Belton he could not help owning, that he was as uneaſy as they were. He was not a little pleaſ-

ed to ſee them return: and preſſing Wills very home concerning his morning expedition, he learned the truth with much difficulty from him, which he entreated him to conceal from Juliet. However, the ſervants, having ſeen Lord Cotſwold's carriage driving in a hurry from the field, mentioned it at home, and it came to Juliet's ears; who, gueſſing what had happened, gently chid her lover for expoſing his life to danger, which was ſo dear to her. Wills calmed her fears by promiſing never to offend again. He did not let his friend's affair cool: but recommended Lawſon ſtrongly to Mr. Belton: and Sophy not oppoſing, they determined to be made happy on the ſame day.

It came at laſt, and the two friends were ſupremely bleſſed. Nor was the joy on this occaſion confined to them alone: the whole country partook of it. The fathers grew young again in the proſpect of the happineſs of their dear children. Wills, poſſeſſed of every thing the heart of man can wiſh for, ſhews his gratitude, by endeavouring to make every body happy about him. In this taſk he is aſſiſted by his lovely partner, who begins to grow too unwieldy to take much exerciſe.

The reward of guilt is miſery: The tenaciouſneſs of avarice brings its own puniſhment: The violation of truth is followed by ſhame and remorſe; and a life of iniquity is terminated in woe. But peace and honour ſhall attend on him, whoſe honeſt and upright heart, conſcious of its integrity actuated by a principle of univerſal benevolence, feels and relie-

ves, not only the diſtreſſes of virtue and merit, but even ſtrives to aſſuage the anguiſh that is the eternal lot of the wicked: happineſs ſhall ſtand at his right hand, and content ſhall crown his days.

ERRATA.

Pag. 17 *line laſt for* mutual *read* mutually
— ib. *l. 4 from bottom;* pag. 61 *l.* 3; 98. *l.* 5; 101. *l.* 18; 191. *l.* 17; 238 *l.* 13; *for* he *read* be
— 31 *l.* 4 *for* refort *read* reſort
— 45 *l.* 24 *for* nedleſs *read* needleſs
— 76 *l.* 3 *from bottom* for ramained *read* remained
— 84 *l.* 16 *for* notarious *read* notorious
— 100 *l.* 6 *for* a *read* as
— ib. *l.* 10 *for* for *read* four
— 103 *l.* 2 *from bottom for* my *read* may
— 110 *l.* 14 *for* war *read* was
— 124 *l.* 4 *from bottom for* rerentive *read* retentive
— 128 *l.* 13 *after* before *add* he
— 135 *l.* 12 *for* have *read* love
— 170 *l.* 6 *for* en *read* on
— 189 *l.* 19 *for* thoughs *read* thoughts
— 250 *l.* 12 *for* to *read* no

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